

THE
HISTORY
OF
NED EVANS.

THE HISTORY OF

NEW YORK

FROM 1609 TO 1784

BY J. B. ROBINSON

NEW YORK

1852

THE
HISTORY
OF
NED EVANS. K

"O'erstep not the modesty of Nature!"

SHAKESPEARE.

SECOND EDITION.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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THE
HISTORY
OF
NED EVANS.

CHAP. I.

IN one of those beautiful and retired valleys which abound in the country once known by the general name of Snowdon, and which now forms a part of the county of Caernarvon, was seated the humble but hospitable dwelling of the reverend Evan Evans. The high mountain of Penmanmawr defended this little mansion from the chilling blasts of the north-east; whilst a stream purer

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than crystal ran murmuring among the rocks which time and the winter's torrents had separated from the neighbouring mountains, forming a series of successive water-falls before his windows, and clothing its banks with an eternal verdure. Thousands of sheep, whose fleeces might vie with snow in whiteness, were the happy tenants of this peaceful vale; whose innocent bleatings, being echoed by surrounding woods, and mixed with the songs of birds and the murmurs of the brook, formed a concert of natural and soothing music, which art can seldom equal, and never excel. Here Mr. Evans had resided for upwards of eighteen years, and exercised the pastoral office literally over his sheep, and figuratively over a numerous parish in a manner that won him the hearts of all his congregation.

The reader must not imagine however that Mr. Evans was a beneficed clergyman. He had indeed long fulfilled the duties

duties of one with respectable abilities, and with conscientious and unceasing diligence; but the emoluments were reaped by a gentleman who had never seen the parish but once, when he quarrelled with the parishioners about his tythes, and had therefore resolved never to come among them again. It is possible however they had no great loss, for the trust was faithfully executed by the worthy Evans for the small salary of 20l. a year, which, with the profits of a few acres round his little dwelling, and which could hardly be estimated at above 20l. more, was all the income he possessed in the world. But though fortune had dealt thus hardly by him, nature had been more benignant; for from her he inherited an excellent constitution both of body and mind, and, what was still more valuable, a heart overflowing with kindness, and replete with every virtue that could ennoble and exalt a man. Mr. Evans moreover was happy in an excellent wife, whom he had

married in his youth from the uncommon motive of pure affection, without any view either to interest or fortune; and which was inspired by the equally uncommon quality of unalterable sweetness of temper, which gave her a look of benignity surpassing beauty, and which she now retained in full perfection at an age when beauty (if she ever had any) would have been considerably impaired. She had now lived with her husband upwards of thirty years in happy wedlock; and I heard her declare, that in all that time she had never differed with him but once, and that too was on a point about which it might be presumed he had no right to interfere. It was soon after he took her home to a little house he had in the neighbouring diocese of St. Asaph (where indeed he was born, and where he first served a cure, before he removed to his present dwelling) that the good woman was employed on her first brewing of ale; a matter of very considerable import-

importance to a Welch housewife; and of no less moment to a Welch parson; and honest Evans, being an adept in the art, and a perfect connoisseur in the true smack of cwrw (as ale is called in his country), took the liberty to find fault with his wife's management; which it must be confessed was a tender point, and what no husband ought to presume to do. It is therefore not to be wondered at if the good lady for the first time in her life was a little off her guard, and defended her undoubted prerogative of managing her drink as she thought fit; it is much more to be admired, that this was the last time as well as the first that she ever differed from her husband. And indeed she had candour enough to declare, that it was the event of this quarrel which confirmed her in perfect submission ever after; for certain it is, the ale proved sour, which she wisely ascribing to the tartness of some speeches she chanced then to let fall, determined from

that time forth that no ill humour of hers should ever again be the cause of a domestic calamity—a resolution which she has inviolably kept ever since, and which I should most heartily recommend to all those good wives who may chance to peruse this story.

Mrs. Evans, while she resided at St. Asaph, had borne to her husband one daughter, whom they named Winifrid, from a lady of illustrious beauty and virtue in those parts, whose name has long since been enrolled amongst the martyrs and saints in heaven; and indeed the cherub countenance and the opening virtues of the little terrestrial Winifrid filled her parents' hearts with the fond and pleasing hope that she would one day rival the saint in every excellence both of body and mind; but Providence thought fit to determine otherwise, and took her to himself in the seventh year of her age. The afflicted parents sustained their loss with that meekness and resignation

tion which true wisdom and a just sense of religion never fail to inspire. They were however so far infected with human weakness that their home became disagreeable to them. They could not bear the walks in which they no longer saw their little darling: and the neat bit of garden before the house in which she used to play, and where with transport they so often beheld her tying up the flowers, and with artless innocence displaying taste even in her most careless diversions, for ever recalled her to their mind, and filled their eyes with a fountain of perpetual sorrow, too tender and too distressing for hearts so susceptible as theirs to endure. It was this melancholy event which first determined them to quit St. Asaph; and the cure in Caernarvonshire soon after offering, they gladly removed to it; but not before Heaven had assuaged their sorrow by sending them a son, who at the opening of this history was in the nineteenth year of his age. This

darling boy, whose name was Edward, and in whom all their cares and all their hopes were now centred, was every way worthy of their tenderest affection. His beauty was of that manly kind where robust strength is united to perfect elegance: the blushes of the morning seemed to be lighted up in his cheeks, which glowed with health, and which were shaded by his thick and glossy hair, that played about his neck in natural curls; whilst wit tempered with good nature beamed from his dark eyes, whose fire was softened without being concealed by a pair of long eye-lashes of the deepest brown. There was, besides, a grace and majesty in his figure that would have bestowed dignity upon a crown, and which was far surpassing any thing that could be expected from the son of a Welch curate.

Nor was the mind of this amiable youth any way inferior to his person. It had been the delightful task of Mr.
Evans

Evans to form his heart from the first dawn of opening reason, and nature had been so kind as to give him a heart, than which a worthier was never planted in a human breast. Under the care of this kind instructor he had acquired a competent knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages; and having an elegant turn for music and painting, which indeed the scenes about him had naturally inspired, he had improved those talents merely by the dint of industry and genius in a wonderful manner, and had acquired many accomplishments that adorn the gentleman, to a degree infinitely beyond what could be expected from the humility of his station and the lowness of his finances. For this he was indebted to a happy disposition of nature, which drank instruction more greedily than it could be offered; and as the excellent character of Mr. Evans made every thing that belonged to him an object of regard, young Edward found no difficulty in being ad-

mitted to the best companies in the neighbourhood, where his own good qualities were soon known and admired, and every where established him a general favourite. In these societies his good sense soon taught him to distinguish what was most estimable; and though he never remembered to have been fifty miles from the sequestered habitation in which he dwelt, yet neither his figure nor his manners would have been reckoned awkward in any drawing-room in Europe.

Such was Ned Evans, the subject of the following memoirs; for whose welfare and success the author confesses himself deeply interested, and to whom he trusts the reader is already not wholly indifferent; and he hopes that, in the course of his future history, he will never be found to act unbecoming his character, nor give occasion to forfeit that good opinion which his first appearance generally inspired.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

IT was one night in the month of November in the year 1779, that our good curate and his amiable wife had sat down to regale themselves over a mug of ale and a plate of toasted cheefe; when they were suddenly startled by a bright flash of lightning, which was instantly followed by a tremendous clap of thunder. Mrs. Evans was naturally timorous, and more afraid of thunder than of any thing else in the world; and though her husband was not subject to this weakness, yet the uncommon loudness of the peal, and the season of the year when thunder is but a rare phenomenon, hindered him to be altogether at ease; especially as it was not long before that a house in the neighbourhood had been set on fire by lightning, and much mischief done, though

the family had the good fortune to escape. But it was not for his house, nor for himself, that his fears were alarmed on this occasion; the morning had been uncommonly fine, and he had taken advantage of it to send Ned as far as Bangor, about nine miles off, on some business he had with the register of the diocese; and Ned, being stout, and unwilling to tire his father's only horse, had taken an oaken staff in his hand, and trusted to his own legs for the journey; in which indeed his wisdom was as conspicuous as his humanity; for it is certain that his own two were much better and safer to be relied on than the other's four. Be that as it may, he was not yet come back, though it was long past the hour he had been expected; and as he was not accustomed to stay on any errands, and the night was now set in with all its horrors of storm and of darkness, we may forgive our worthy curate, if he began to be disturbed by some rising fears; which however he
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endeavoured to suppress out of compassion to his wife, who was now in such an agony of terror as could not support itself under any addition. Long did they listen with attentive and expecting ears, hoping to hear the welcome tread of Ned's active and nimble feet; the ale and the cheese (now cold) were suffered to stand neglected on the table; whilst the good man, holding his wife's left hand in his right, while her head rested on his bosom, spoke not to her, but looked unutterable tenderness and affection. He was supporting her in this tender attitude, and endeavouring to soothe her fears, when Towser, who was Ned's favourite dog, and was lying on the hearth, set up a loud and melancholy howl; which was presently followed by the trampling of horses, and the sound of many voices at the gate. Poor Mrs. Evans, who had long been wound up to the highest pitch of terror, could not support this new alarm, and immediately
fainted

fainted in her husband's arms ; who was himself in a condition not much better, bawling in vain to their only maid to come to her mistress's assistance ; but she had long since crept into her bed, terrified at the thunder, where she lay smothering under the clothes, incapable of hearing, and afraid even to draw her breath. The noise now grew louder, and approached the house, when Mr. Evans distinctly heard Ned's voice calling for assistance, and begging him to open the door. The agitation the poor man was in is not to be described ; his wife still senseless in his arms, and his boy, for aught he knew, about to be murdered at the gate. He had presence of mind however to lay her gently in an arm-chair which happily stood by him, and then endeavouring to spring to the door, he unluckily overthrew the table, with his ale and his cheese, and, what was far more unfortunate, the candle, which was extinguished in the fall. All was now darkness and

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confusion, Ned still thundering at the door, and calling on his father. "What, in the name of God, has happened to you?" said he, as he endeavoured to unbolt the lock. "Nothing to myself," cried Ned, "but every thing that is disastrous to two unhappy ladies, one of whom is in my arms." "Thank God! Thank God!" replied the honest curate, not considering what he said, but rejoiced to find that Ned at least was safe; when continuing to fumble about the lock, the youth's patience was exhausted, and driving his foot against the door with all his force, he burst it open with such violence, that it laid the old gentleman sprawling on the floor. Ned then came in, supporting the lady, who was altogether senseless; and finding his father on the ground, "My dear Sir," said he, "I hope I have not hurt you: I heartily beg your pardon; for, on my soul! I meant you no disrespect, but the situation of this unhappy lady must excuse me." "It does, it does, my dear boy,

boy, were it ten times worse ; I am not hurt, and if I was, the joy of seeing you safe would cure me." He now rose from the floor, and, groping into the kitchen, discovered Molly in her covert, whom he quickly unlodged, and set about endeavouring to recover a light. A candle at length was brought, and discovered a spectacle of sorrow, the extent of which was not known before ; Ned, wet to the skin, supporting in his arms a beautiful creature of about seventeen, dressed in a travelling habit of the most elegant fashion : her hair, dark as the wing of the raven, was floating all dishevelled over her lovely bosom, which just heaved with breath ; and her cheek, all pale as ashes, lay reclined upon his neck ; her eyes seemed closed in death ; and she was wholly unconscious where she was, or how there, or what had happened. Behind were two postillions bearing in the body of another female, dressed with the same elegance, but advanced in years ;

years; whilst blood was streaming from a wound which she had received in her breast. Poor Evans stood motionless with horror and astonishment; wholly regardless of his wife, who was now come to herself, but equally entranced with terror and surprise. At length he found utterance; and clasping his hands together, "Oh! Ned," he cried, "who is this angel you have brought here, and what has befallen her?" "Alas! Sir," said he, "I cannot tell—all I know, I shall relate. As I was coming home from Bangor (where, as it now turns out, I was fortunately detained), about a hundred yards beyond the turning to the house, I met a post-chaise and four on the turnpike road: it had globes with lights in them, by the glimmering of which I saw it suddenly attacked by two highwaymen on horseback; one of whom stopped the foremost postillion, whilst the other went to the window of the chaise. I soon after heard a female shriek, when springing forward:

forward to give them what assistance I could afford, I was lucky enough to knock the scoundrel at the window down with the oak stick I had in my hand; which the other fellow seeing, immediately quitted the postillion, and discharged a loaded blunderbuss, as I believe, into the chaise. The unfortunate lady whom you see killed, said, 'Oh God!' and instantly expired. This angel, whom you now see senseless in my arms, fell into them in this condition. The wicked perpetrators of this horrible act took advantage of the darkness and confusion, and have escaped. The postillions are no way to blame; they behaved as well as lads in their situation could do: they have preserved the trunks and the effects; and the wretched authors of all this mischief have no other prey but the life of this innocent and unfortunate lady. I trust that the lovely object in my arms has no other hurt but fright, and I rejoice that Providence has so ordered it

as to bring me to her assistance, and that the misfortune has happened so near the house which can afford her an asylum in her present comfortless and forlorn situation." "And I rejoice, too," said honest Evans, "and I bless my God, who has inspired you with courage and resolution to fear no danger in succouring the distressed, and who has given me this humble habitation to be a comfort and refuge to this fair unfortunate. Go, my dear," said he, turning to his wife, who was now wholly recovered, "go and see what cordial or other thing you can find, that can help to restore her to her senses." He now turned to the postillions, who were standing all this time, bearing the body of the murdered lady between them; and having assisted them to dispose it decently on chairs set for the purpose, he desired them to tell him all they knew of the matter. They said they were wholly ignorant who the ladies were, but they certainly were people of condition—
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that they had come from London, and had crossed the ferry at Conway, about four o'clock—that they were on their way to Ireland, of which country they believed they were natives, and wishing to overtake the packet, which sails to-morrow from the Head, they were in haste to get on to Bangor this night; and had therefore, late as it was, taken a chaise and four at Conway for that purpose; that they had come on very well notwithstanding the storm till the highwaymen stopped them—and that all the rest was just as Mr. Edward had described it.

Mrs. Evans now returned, with the remains of a bottle of Hungary water, which was the only thing she had in the house that was like a cordial (for she was not one of those good women, who, under the pretence of weak nerves and windy stomachs, are for ever taking drams disguised with the name of cordial waters); and with this she bathed the
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lady's temples, while her husband held a bottle of salts to her nose, Ned Evans still supporting her in his arms. In a little time she fetched a deep sigh; and soon after raising her languid eyes, which still shone, though with diminished lustre, "Where am I?" said she, "and into what hands am I fallen?"—"You are fallen into honourable hands," replied Evans; "into hands that shall be exerted to the utmost to administer to you every comfort and consolation they can procure, and which your appearance and situation so justly demand." "Whoever you are, Sir," said she, "I thank you; greatly, greatly do I thank you." "Dear lady," said Ned, "let me support you to this arm-chair; sit down a little and endeavour to be composed, till we can get you some refreshment." She now raised herself upon her feet; when turning to be led, and beholding the body of her companion where Evans and the postillions had laid it out, she sprang to it with renewed strength, and

and throwing herself on her knees and embracing it in her arms, "Oh! Mrs. Melville," said she, "my dear, my faithful, my parental friend, have I lost you for ever!" She kissed the corpse with an intense fervor, and turning up her eyes to Heaven, she burst into a violent flood of tears.

Mrs. Evans and Ned would have gone to her and endeavoured to force her to the chair; but Mr. Evans forbade them. "Let her alone awhile," said he; "her heart is agitated to the last degree, and tears will be the speediest and most effectual relief." They suffered her then to remain unmolested; and she continued in the same posture, and with the same unceasing flow of sorrow, for about a quarter of an hour; at length she stopped, and rising from the body, "It is enough," said she; "you are gone, and you are a blessed inhabitant of heaven: I am left on earth to deplore the best and most beloved of friends." Ned now stepped

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ped forward, and offering her his hand, she suffered herself to be led to the arm-chair, and composedly sat down. A deep silence was kept for some minutes. At length Mr. Evans ventured to speak: "I lament, Madam," said he, "with the deepest and most unfeigned sorrow, the fatal event which has procured me the honour of seeing you in this house: nevertheless, it is a consolation to me, that my son here has been the means of affording you some relief, and of conducting you to this humble habitation; and I promise you, both for my wife and for myself, that you cannot oblige us more than by considering yourself at home, and making use of such accommodation as it affords, as long as it may be necessary or agreeable to you to stay." "Yes, indeed, Madam," said Mrs. Evans, "both my husband and I will think it the happiest incident in our lives to accommodate you on this melancholy occasion; and we only lament that our entertainment cannot be equal
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to what, from your appearance, you have certainly been accustomed to : but, such as it is, we hope you will accept it."

"Yes, Madam," replied the lady, "I will gladly and thankfully accept it; and I think myself happy, that when so sudden and so dreadful a calamity came upon me, Providence has graciously conducted me to such hospitable and benevolent minds as yours." Then, turning to Ned, she said, "I find it is to you, young gentleman, I am indebted for this generous deliverance. I beg your pardon, I ought indeed to have recollected it before; but the sad confusion of my thoughts and hurry of my spirits must plead my excuse. I am glad, however, that I now know you for my protector and deliverer; and you may assure yourself that my gratitude shall cease only with my life."

Ned's face was covered with blushes; but presently recollecting himself, "Dear lady," he said, "your condescension overwhelms

whelms me ; you owe me no gratitude : I did nothing but my duty, and what was the duty of every man on the like occasion ; and had my life been the forfeit of it, I should gladly have given it to rescue yours.”

“ That you have ventured it indeed,” said the lady, “ is abundantly apparent, and I should be unworthy of the protection you have afforded me, if I should ever forget it.” She now asked for a glass of water, which being brought her, Mr. Evans told her that he was extremely sorry it was out of his power, at that time, to ask her to qualify it with any better liquor. “ I have indeed,” said he, “ some excellent ale of my own brewing, which, if you ever taste that liquor, I can venture to recommend : but as for wine, Madam, I am but a poor curate, and never was master of a dozen in all my life ; though, could I have foreseen the honour of having you for my guest, I should have taken care not to have been wholly unprovided.” She thanked him with an obliging smile, and told him that

at that time no liquor whatever was so agreeable to her as pure spring water. "I am sorry indeed," said she, "for your own sake, that fortune has not bestowed on you whatever is thought comfortable in life: but for myself, I entreat you will not give yourself the smallest uneasiness. I trust that in a few days I shall be able to continue my journey to Ireland, where my friends live, and where I am extremely anxious to be; in the mean time I must be indebted to you for the protection of your house, which is all I stand in need of at present, and shall cheerfully and thankfully put up with your own fare, whatever it may be."

Mrs. Evans then asked her if she could not be prevailed on to eat a bit of something; "there is very good butter and cheese in the house," said she, "and if you could fancy it, I could get you a Welsh rabbit in a few minutes:" the lady assured her that she could not taste any thing, but would be obliged to her, if, as soon as was convenient,

she would shew her to her chamber. The good woman replied, that she believed her room was by that time ready; that she would go and see; and when it was, would immediately come back and conduct her to it. In a short time she returned with a candle; and the lady rising, curtsied to the two gentlemen, and wished them a good night. As she passed the body of her departed friend, she stopped for about a minute, and contemplated it in silence; she then took one of the hands, and, stooping down, kissed it with impassioned tenderness; her eyes swimming in tears were raised to heaven, and her lips seemed to say something, though her voice was not heard. She then rose, and wiping her tears with a cambrick handkerchief, withdrew.

The two gentlemen who were standing followed her with their eyes, and bowing as she went out of the room, remained fixed in thought for some time afterwards. Evans at length broke silence—"Go, my dear boy," said he to Ned, "into the

kitchen, and see that all the baggage of these unfortunate ladies be brought into the house: let the horses be taken care of as well as they can, and let the poor lads have a good fire, and plenty of ale to comfort them after this sad adventure.

Ned immediately went, and found things already taken care of in the manner prescribed. There was a lad at the house, one David Morgan, the son of a man who had lived as a farm-servant with Mr. Evans ever since he had come to that part of the country; this lad was much about Ned's age and size, a sturdy well-looking fellow as any of his station in the country; and as they had been brought up boys together, there subsisted a friendship and attachment between them, which made David a frequent inmate of the house, though he was not a regular servant in it. This lad was entertaining the two postillions, after having helped them with their horses, and trunks, &c. and extolling his young master's prowess and his own. "Ah!" says he, "if I had
been

been there with young maister, those scoundrel robbers should not have escaped."

"Why, what would you have done?" said one of the postillions. "We would have lent them such a flick," said David, "as they would never have been cured of but by the gallows." "Mayhap you would have found yourselves mistaken," said the other; "why they had fire arms with them, and what could you have done then?" "Why the same as maister did with one of them," said David. "Damn them and their fire-arms together! if the Devil had been with them, with a pistol as big as Bangor steeple, I would na ha fear'd 'un, provided I had a prayer-book in my pocket, and young maister at my back." "Hut you fool you," said Ned just then entering, "hold your tongue, and drink your ale: it is not a week since I saw you frightened almost to death by farmer Watkins' white horse." "True, maister," said the other, "but then I took him for a ghost! I own I's woundily afraid of dead men, but I do

not fear any living man that ever wore a head." "Then," said Ned, "you are just the reverse of me; for I do not fear any dead man; but I will not be so vain as to assert that no living man could alarm me. But that is neither here nor there—are all the things brought safe out of the carriage, and are the horses fed?" Being answered in the affirmative, he told them they might sit on then and drink their ale, but charged them to make no noise, lest they should disturb the poor lady who had gone to her repose; and so saying, he returned to the parlour.

It was now growing late, and as there were but two beds in the house, one of which the lady occupied, Ned asked his father if he would not come and sleep with him; for, as for Mrs. Evans, she slept upon a pallet in the same chamber with the lady. Mr. Evans replied, that the sad adventure of the evening had driven all sleep out of his head. "Besides, my dear," said he, "you know decency requires that some person

son should sit up with the corpse. Go, then, my dear boy, go you to your bed ; you cannot be otherwise than fatigued ; but as for me, I shall sit here until the morning."

Ned then retired to rest ; where we will leave him to that sound and refreshing sleep which innocence of mind, and health of body, never fail to bestow. Mr. Evans spent the greatest part of the night in prayer, as was his custom when any unusual accident befel him ; and when he was not on his knees, he relieved himself by reading "Sherlock upon Death," a book which he extremely admired, and which of all others seems best calculated to give comfort and consolation to an afflicted heart.

C H A P. III.

NED rose as soon as it was day ; and being impatient to hear something of the lady, went immediately to the parlour to his father. “ Well, Sir,” said he, “ what tidings have you heard of our unfortunate lodger, and do you know how she has passed the night ? ” “ I have not heard a word,” said Mr. Evans, “ nor seen a creature but the maid, who has just been here to make up the fire ; but go, my dear, and bid her tap at the door, and ask your mother how she is.” Ned did as directed, and then went out to see about the horses and postillions : they were up getting ready to go away. He desired them to go into the house, and get some cheese and ale for their breakfast, and not to go away without seeing his father. He then returned to the parlour, where he found Mrs. Evans sitting

ting with her husband ; when asking about the lady, " Alas ! " said she, " poor soul, she has not closed her eyes the whole night, and indeed I am greatly alarmed for her health. She complains of a violent pain in her head and back, and is continually shivering with cold, though to the touch she is like a coal of fire. I am going to make her a little warm tea, which perhaps may throw her into a perspiration, and be of service to her." " Do, my dear," said Evans, " and I think it would be prudent to send to Conway for Doctor Jones, for God knows how her illness may turn out." This thought was highly approved of, and Ned said that he would be himself the messenger, in order to be sure to bring him, let him be where he would ; and now going out to order the horse, the postillions told him he should be welcome to a seat in their chaise, and they would engage to carry him quicker than any other conveyance. This was accepted of ; and Mr. Evans finding the chaise had been

paid for by the ladies at Conway, gave the lads half a crown each, in reward for their activity and attention; and Ned hastily taking off a bowl of milk, and eating a crust with it, set off at full speed with them. He got to Conway in little more than an hour, and was lucky enough to find Doctor Jones at home. The doctor was not a regular physician, but had long practised as a surgeon and apothecary with good reputation. He was a benevolent and humane man; qualities which are peculiarly necessary in his profession, and which often do more in curing a patient than the drugs he swallows. When the doctor heard the tale, it awakened all his feelings. "I will go with you, my friend," said he, "in ten minutes; I will only order other horses for expedition, and I will take back the chaise at my own expence; for, exclusive of the lady who calls for all tenderness and attention, I would go to the world's end to serve your father or any of his family." Ned thanked him
for

for his kindness; and now finding that a chaise was to carry him back, he took care to get a dozen of the best wine that could be had in Conway, that the poor lady might want no comfort that could be procured for her. The rumour of the robbery and murder had reached Conway the night before; but now that Ned and the postillions appeared, every body crowded about them to hear the particulars. He satisfied them as concisely as he could, and then set off with the doctor for his father's, accompanied with the praises and the blessings of all who had heard the story. The lads drove at a good rate, and when Mr. Evans heard the chaise, guessing by its return that the doctor was come, he went out to meet him. "My dear doctor," said he, as he was alighting, "I always am glad to see you, but never did your presence give me so much pleasure as at this instant; I am infinitely obliged to you for the haste you have made to visit my unfortunate guest, whose situ-

ation is so distressing, that all the tenderness and attention we can pay to her is not equal to her claim upon us for it." "Her situation is deplorable indeed," replied the doctor, "and her claim for attention and tenderness as great: it is a consolation, however, to know that she has happened among those who can fully feel for her; and whose sympathetic hearts will do every thing that can alleviate her distress. "Does she know," continued he, "that I have been sent for, or was it only a mere motion of your own?" "She knows nothing about it," replied Mr. Evans; "my wife represented her to me to be in such a situation as I thought alarming; and as I know that in all distempers much may be done in the beginning, which, if that opportunity be lost, may never be able to be done afterwards, I took the liberty to send for you of my own head, without consulting her on the subject, which might perhaps have alarmed her more, and could answer no good end that I can see." "You have done

done wisely," replied the doctor; "it is of no consequence who sent for me, nor did I ask the question with any other view than merely to know the fact before I speak to herself; it is enough for me that she is in distress, and that she wants medical assistance; and I shall be happy, my dear friend, to go hand in hand with you in giving her that and every other assistance that she may happen to want. "You speak like a gentleman and a christian," replied Evans, "and I only pray that our assistance may be effectual." Mrs. Evans now came down; and the doctor, after the first salutation, enquiring about the lady, she told him she was just then in a doze, but it did not seem like one that would refresh her; she breathed hard, and started often, and sometimes muttered something which she could not understand. "Will you step up yourself, doctor, and look at her? and you will be better able to judge." "No, my dear madam," replied the doctor, "I will not go to her till she is apprised of my coming.

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If she happened to wake while I was at her bed-side, there is no saying what effect the seeing a stranger in her room might have upon her in her present weak condition. Be you so good as to return to her, and sit by her till she wakes; and then tell her, that seeing her out of order, you took the liberty to send for me, as I lived in the neighbourhood, and ask her leave to bring me to her." "I believe indeed you are right," replied Mrs. Evans; "her spirits are so fluttered that she could not bear surprise of any kind; I will go and do as you bid me, and return again as soon as I am authorised." Mr. Evans then offered the doctor some refreshment; and he said he would take a bit of dry toast and some mulled ale, for the day was cold, and he had come off without any breakfast. They talked of indifferent matters while this was preparing; and when it came, Ned's stomach was so complaisant as to enable him to assist the doctor very effectually in demolishing the ale and toast, together

gether with half a dozen eggs that they got boiled. They had scarcely finished when Mrs. Evans came down, and acquainted the doctor that the lady had waked, and readily consented to see him. He immediately followed her up stairs; when he came to the bed side, and beheld the lovely object he came to see, he could not suppress the emotion her beauty and her distress inspired—he was obliged to turn aside his head to conceal the manly tear which trembled in his eye. The voice of the lady recalled him to himself. “I am obliged to you, Sir,” said she, “and to this kind gentlewoman, for the tender concern you seem to take for my health; I was in hopes to have been able to continue my journey home; but alas! I am very unable even to speak; and if Providence designs to make this my home, his will be done; I think I am content.” “Oh, my dear madam!” replied the doctor, “I trust you have many many years of health and happiness before you yet. It is natural, and
what

what might be expected, that the violent shock your spirits have received should have an effect on your health, but I trust there is no reason to apprehend but that rest and a little time will perfectly restore you.” The lady gazed on him with a languid eye for a little time: at length she spoke again. “Oh! Mrs. Melville—Sir—my dear Mrs. Melville—have you seen her? The robbers did not kill her—they could not kill her—has she slept, Sir?—do tell me, has she slept?” The doctor now perceived that she was raving, and that the dreadful accident of the night before had brought a fever on her spirits: he felt her pulse; and finding them extremely low, he told Mrs. Evans, that, for the present, there was nothing to be done but to keep her quiet—that rest was of the greatest importance to her—that the least sudden noise might prove fatal, or drive her into madness—that she must be soothed, and crossed in nothing; and for nourishment she might give her a little wine whey, acidulated with
juice

juice of lemon, or a little cream of tartar ; but that bleeding, or any thing of that kind, was highly improper. All that can be done at present is to keep her quiet, and endeavour to support her strength. I will call again to-morrow," said he, " and even stay with her, should it become necessary." He now left the room totally unobserved by the lady, who indeed was not in a condition to observe any thing.

When he came to the parlour, Mr. Evans saw by his countenance the situation of the lady ; he was anxious, yet afraid to ask him what he thought of her. The doctor relieved him from this embarrassment : " It is happy, my dear friend," said he, " that you sent for me ; vastly fortunate that I chanced to be in the way. This poor lady is in a most alarming situation, in a fever of the most critical and dangerous kind ; it is not, however, infectious, nor need you fear that your humanity will be any otherwise wounded than in seeing this unfortunate lady die."

" What !"

“What!” interrupted Ned in an agony of distress, “is she dying?” “No, no!” replied the doctor, “I do not say that—God forbid!—I only mean that her illness is of a very dangerous kind, and her symptoms at present unfavourable. I do not despair, however, but that, with the blessing of God, she may come through.” “May God Almighty graciously bestow that blessing upon us!” said Evans—“and I trust he will, since it surely was by his inspiration that I sent for you.” The doctor then repeated to Mr. Evans the directions he had given above stairs to his wife, and when he mentioned wine whey, “Good God!” said Evans, “how forgetful I am! I protest there is not a drop of wine in the house. Oh! that I had thought of sending for it in the morning to Conway!” “Do not be uneasy on that head, my dear Sir,” said Ned; “I have taken care of that, and brought in the chaise a dozen of the best I could get.” “Have you indeed?” said Evans; “I rejoice at that, and
cannot

cannot but admire and love that attention which I have always seen you pay to every person in distress." " Oh ! " said Ned, " this lady's distress is enough to awake attention in a stone." " It is indeed," replied the doctor; and now finding the day advanced beyond the moon, he said his other patients required his attendance, and he must therefore return to Conway, but promised to be back again the next day. " To-morrow," said Mr. Evans, " is Sunday, and therefore I shall be engaged all the morning; but do, my dear friend, contrive matters so as to stay and eat a bit of my own mutton with me; I shall be grieved if, when I come from church, I should find you gone." The doctor said he could not promise for staying, as it depended upon his other patients whether he could do it with propriety or not; but that if he could, he would. So saying, he took leave; and Mr. Evans and Ned attending him to the door, he got into the chaise and drove off.

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The rest of the day passed off in a thoughtful and serious manner, which, on Mr. Evans's part, was not uncommon, as he usually dedicated the evening of Saturday to the contemplation of his important duty the following day; but Ned's spirits were not used to be depressed; and indeed it required something very solemn and affecting to keep him serious half an hour together, for his heart by nature was tuned to gaiety, which he had neither art nor necessity to conceal, and which diffused an air of cheerfulness over his countenance that did not at all accord with gravity and sedateness. In the evening, preparations were made for paying the last sad office to Mrs. Melville, who was still lying in the same spot where the postillions had deposited her. It was intended to inter her the following evening after prayer. Mrs. Evans therefore took care to have her properly dressed for the grave, and laid by her other clothes, and particularly her pockets, without examining their contents, in a place
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where they would be secure. When her coffin came home, Mr. Evans had her removed to an out-house, that the melancholy sound of nailing her up in it might not reach the ears of the lady above stairs, who was not able to bear noise of any kind, and least of all that which, if she suspected the occasion, would probably fit her for the same sad service. With regard to her situation, there was no material alteration in it. She continued extremely low and languid, sometimes in her senses, and sometimes wandering. She scarce ever spoke, except for a little drink. She did not appear to sleep, which, if it could be procured, was the best thing for her, but which hitherto she had not been able to do, at least in that quiet and composed manner which alone could tend to restore her. At night Mr. Evans and Ned sat down to their supper, and finished the most silent and thoughtful meal they had ever eaten together. Soon after they retired to the same bed to rest.

Youth

Youth and health soon procured Ned the blessing of quiet sleep; but Mr. Evans, notwithstanding his having sat up the night before, continued the greatest part of this night also in meditation and prayer.

C H A P. IV.

THE morning rose, and with it both the gentlemen. Ned was first dressed, and hastening up to the lady's apartment, tapped, with a timorous heart, at the door. Mrs. Evans opened it, and told him she could not perceive any material alteration; that she had been for the most part quiet, but without any refreshing sleep. If at any time she chanced to slumber, it was only for a few minutes, when she awoke in a terror; and she thought these slumbers did her more hurt than good. Poor Ned received the intelligence with a downcast look, and communicated it to his father, who partook of his sorrow. "Yet let us not be altogether cast down, my boy, it is possible she may yet do well: and I shall, this day, in the church, offer up the prayer of the congregation, to beseech Almighty God to spare her to us."

They

They now went to breakfast, which on Ned's part was bread and milk, to which the parson (especially on Sunday) added a piece of cheese and a pint of warm ale. Cheese and ale are to a Welchman nectar and ambrosia ; and our good curate, who loved hospitality as far as his circumstances would allow, took care to be always provided with plenty of both, and that the best of their kind.

When breakfast was over, he retired to prepare himself for church, whither he went as soon as he was dressed ; but Ned staid at home that he might be in the way to receive the doctor when he came, and to execute any directions he might leave in case he could not stay dinner. The church was about half a mile from the house ; and well attended by many genteel families in the neighbourhood, as well as by a numerous congregation of inferior note ; all of whom respected Evans as a father, and could not fail to be virtuous as far as they followed either his precepts or example.

example. His sermons were of that plain and natural kind which were suited to every understanding, and always upon topics which came home to every man's heart. He did not dwell on those abstruse doctrines, which, after all that can be said of them, must for ever remain inexplicable; but he enlarged on those important duties in which all christians are agreed, and which the divine Author of our religion has prescribed, in order to adorn and exalt our nature—to soften and correct the heart; that every man being guided by the dictates of right reason, and by faith in the promises of God, might regulate his life accordingly, and thereby ensure himself respect in this world, and everlasting happiness in the next.

These discourses he delivered in a distinct and not ungraceful manner; and he must be either a very abandoned or very inattentive hearer indeed, who could be present at them without being affected by them. On this day he chose for his sub-

ject, the shortness and extreme uncertainty of life ; and spoke upon it with an unusual degree of eloquence and fervor. He alluded to the fatal and recent example which was at that time in his own house ; and the whole sermon was a kind of funeral oration on the unfortunate Mrs. Melville, whose obsequies were to be performed in the evening. When service was over, most of the congregation crowded about him to ask about the unfortunate lady at his house, and to inform themselves of all the circumstances of the melancholy event : he had the pleasure to find Ned's conduct universally approved, and his praises echoed by every tongue ; and he had likewise the satisfaction to receive many friendly offers of assistance on this occasion, and some of them of a very generous kind ; a pleasing testimony how much he was esteemed and beloved by his people, and that his preaching had not been in vain. These offers, however, as they were not necessary, he politely declined ; but not without warm com-

commendations of their benovolence, as well as thanks for their kindness ; and, mounting his horse, returned home, followed by the blessings and the prayers of his parishioners.

When he got to his own house, Ned met him at the door, and informed him that the doctor had not yet come, and that the poor lady was in the same way. This intelligence neither surprised nor disappointed him ; he was rather pleased the doctor had not arrived, as it gave him greater hopes of his staying ; and, at any rate, he would be glad to hear from himself his opinion of his unfortunate patient. In about a quarter of an hour he came ; and, after first sending for Mrs. Evans, and consulting with her, he followed her up stairs to the lady. Evans and Ned remained below, in silent and pensive expectation of his return. At length he came down with the comfortless intelligence, that she was certainly no better, but rather otherwise ; “ though not so much so,”

said he, "as to make me despond altogether. It is the nature of these nervous fevers to be slow and lingering, and to keep us long in suspense; I have sometimes seen patients so reduced as to appear altogether dead, yet afterwards recover and do well. I have brought here some medicines in my pocket, which you will cause to be given to her as directed." Here he took out some phials, the contents and operations of which it is unnecessary here to relate. "The best medicine," said he, "for her, is quiet and composed sleep; which if we could procure from nature, I should not wholly despair; but it must not be forced." Mr. Evans promised that all his directions should be punctually followed; and Ned's face, which was the picture of distress before, began to resume its usual serenity, merely on the slender comfort that he did not wholly despair.

The doctor now endeavoured to divert them to other topics; and, among the rest, told them, that a suspicious fellow, who
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could not give a very good account of himself, had been taken up at Conway the night before, and was then in the jail—he had been examined before a magistrate, but nothing appeared that could convict him. He then said he thought Ned had better see him, as he might possibly know him again, or might embarrass him with questions that might tend to a discovery. Ned said he had no objection in the world to see him, and would go to the end of the earth to bring the villains to justice; but at the same time confessed he should be very tender how he swore any man's life away, or even gave suspicions of his character. “In the present case,” said he, “I fear I can be of little use; for unluckily it was so dark that I have not the smallest idea of the face or persons of the villains who attacked the chaise. All I know is, I knocked one of them down, and I am sure I hit him on the head. I’ll warrant he bears the mark of the stick; and if this man you talk of has any such mark, it

will be at least a good reason for detaining him in custody. To-night," said he, "I must attend the funeral of Mrs. Melville ; but I will go to Conway in the morning, and, if you are at leisure, we will go together to the prison." The doctor replied, he should be happy to attend him, and asked him to come early in the morning and breakfast with him, and bring him a particular account of the lady ; and when they had done with the prisoner, they would return together to Mr. Evans's.

Dinner was now brought in, which consisted of a leg of mutton and turnips. The parson's pudding, which he usually indulged himself in on Sunday, was obliged to be omitted ; because Mrs. Evans, who always made it, and who understood the composition of a pudding as well as any woman in England, was too much engaged in her tender and humane attendance on the unhappy lady, to admit of her absence for a moment, or her occupying herself with any other business : its place was supplied with
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a double allowance of toasted cheese; a fare not less agreeable either to the parson or physician; and which, accompanied with excellent ale, was given by Evans, and accepted by the doctor, with all the good humour which the most open hospitality and the truest friendship could inspire.

Oh! ye great ones of the earth! ye who are clothed in purple and fine linen, and who fare sumptuously every day! ye who worship Luxury, and make your vows before her golden shrine!—know that ye are far from her!—Would you discover her true residence, leave your luxurious feasts, and idle pomp! seek her in the humble dwelling of contentment! find her in the simple meal which cheerful hospitality bestows, where health sits smiling at the table, and appetite produced by temperance gives relish to every food!

Such was the meal which our good curate and the doctor now enjoyed; and which, after returning thanks to the great bestower (a ceremony now generally omitted

ted where much has been bestowed), they washed down with a temperate glass of ale ; socially conversing on various subjects, in which Ned bore his part, till the hour of evening prayer approached, which on this day was rather earlier than usual in order to give time for performing the last rites to Mrs. Melville.

The doctor attended Mr. Evans to the church, which in compliment to the lady was uncommonly full ; and after the service was finished, she was interred in the body of the church, as you approach the steps leading to the communion-table, in the spot where Evans himself intended to be laid whenever it should please God to take him ! The awful and affecting service appointed for this occasion he read with a becoming dignity ; and though the unfortunate deceased was so unhappy as to die among strangers, and to have her last rites performed by persons wholly unknown to her, and uninterested in her concerns, yet it is a doubt whether in any situation her funeral would have been
more

more respectably attended, or her remains deposited with a greater effusion of sincere and heart-felt sorrow

When all was finished, the doctor went home to Conway, not without reminding Ned of his promise to be with him in the morning, who assured him he should not forget it; and then he and Mr. Evans returned to the house. The rest of the day was spent, as Evans always spent his Sunday evening, in sober and religious conversation; in reading sermons of the most approved authors; and in instructing Ned in that most useful of all knowledge, the knowledge of himself and of his Maker.

Ned listened to his instructions, not only with attention but delight: for, though he was by nature of a gay and lively disposition, and of a constitution of body active and vigorous in the highest degree; though he loved diversion, and excelled in all those exercises with which young men of his age are usually delighted, yet the acquisition of knowledge had charms for him

still more attracting. His understanding was clear and penetrating ; his heart warm and affectionate. Every thing that was grand and sublime interested the one, every thing delicate and refined touched the other. The history of the gospel, therefore, which eminently unites whatever is sublime and whatever is beautiful, could not fail to affect his heart : he loved Christianity because it is indeed lovely, and he practised it because it was congenial to his feelings, without hypocrisy, and without enthusiasm. I would not have the reader imagine, however, that he was an angel or a saint. Alas ! he was human, and, as all human creatures do, he erred. His errors, however, were not those of a bad or a corrupt heart ; not such as disgraced his honour or his sentiments : they were the failings of nature, under temptations sometimes too powerful to be resisted, yet always repented of, and always atoned for, as far as he was able.

While Mr. Evans and his son were thus piously and instructively employed, they
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were interrupted by the arrival of two visitors, who sometimes came to drink tea on a Sunday evening with Mrs. Evans. Tea was a luxury that did not suit with their finances to indulge in every day ; but as Mrs. Evans was fond of it, though far too prudent to allow herself any gratification which their income was not fully equal to, the use of it was confined to Sunday evening, and to such occasional times as they happened to be visited by any person whose situation in life made it necessary to offer it to them.

The visitors who now arrived were Mrs. Watkin and her daughter, the ~~wife~~ and only child of the farmer in the neighbourhood, whose white horse, as we have before noticed, was taken for a ghost by David Morgan. Mrs. Watkin was one of those good kind of women who are not to be met with every day. Her education and understanding were on the ordinary level of those of her rank ; her temper was good, and her disposition meek and submitting : and happy was it for her that it was so, for she was

yoked to a very imperious and severe husband. Watkin was a man between fifty and sixty years of age, of a large person and austere countenance ; his temper was answerable ; severe and unaccommodating ; yet, on some occasions, he appeared not wholly divested of good nature. He had the reputation of being scrupulously honest, and of possessing great skill in his business. His greatest fault was the love of money, to which he sacrificed every thing except integrity ; and as he had long been in possession of a lucrative farm, which he managed with superior skill, it was universally supposed that he was worth a round sum. His wife however, and his daughter, were for the present but little benefited by it. His pride indeed always furnished them with decent clothes to appear in when they went abroad ; but this was a pleasure he seldom allowed them, as he hated company himself, or whatever else was in the smallest degree expensive. He had indeed a respect for Evans, as every body had who knew him,
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and he would sometimes relax so far as to drink a can of ale at his house, and give him one in return; but this was very seldom; and for the most part he staid at home, minding his own concerns, and never troubling himself about other people's. The daughter was a sensible and a good-humoured girl, but rather plain in her person; her education was confined to reading and writing, plain needle-work, and, above all, domestic concerns. She had, however, a sensible and feeling heart, with great sweetness and openness of temper; was about twenty years of age; and, as she was an only child, and her father rich, she was thought to be a desirable wife for almost any young man in the neighbourhood.

As soon as Mr. Evans saw them, he welcomed them in the kindest manner; he laid by his spectacles and his book, and stirred the fire, while Ned handed them chairs, and assisted them in taking off their cloaks and laying them by. Mr. Evans enquired after his good friend Mr. Watkin, and then told
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the ladies he was afraid his wife would not be able to quit the poor lady's apartment, where she constantly attended both day and night; "but if you can endure me," says he, "I will endeavour to be as agreeable as I can: or, if you like a young man better, as may possibly be the case, I can answer for Ned's doing every thing he can to entertain you." Ned said he was never so happy as when employed in the service of the ladies; that he would step up and tell his mother; and if she could not come down, he would endeavour to supply her place himself, provided Miss Watkin would make tea. Miss Watkin bowed consent; and Ned immediately went up stairs.

Mrs. Evans told him that the lady was then quiet, and had been so some time; that she would go down and see Mrs. Watkin and her daughter; and leave the maid in the room till her return, with directions to come to her if the lady should want any thing. Ned sent the maid up stairs, and returned to the parlour, whither he was soon

soon after followed by Mrs. Evans, who had a great regard both for Mrs. Watkin and her daughter, and was always very glad to see them.

Mrs. Watkin told Mrs. Evans, that her visit was not altogether intended as a visit of mere ceremony or curiosity; “nor indeed,” said she, “should I have come at all, at this time, knowing how much you must be engaged, but with the hope of giving you some relief. I hear that you watch continually in the poor lady’s apartment, and that you have not been in bed these two nights. My daughter and I have been exceedingly anxious for your own health, and she made me come here this evening to offer you her assistance as far as she is able.”—“Yes, indeed, Madam,” said Miss Watkin, “you cannot oblige me more than by allowing me to stay with you for a little time, and relieve you in sitting up with the lady; and my father too was very willing I should come, and do any thing for you that I could.” Mrs. Evans said she had been extremely

tremely obliged to them all upon many occasions, but upon none more than the present ;—she thanked her in the warmest manner for her kind attention, and accepted the offer with the greatest gratitude. Evans too was heartily rejoiced, who, by this means, would sometimes see his wife again, whose company he never liked to be long without ; and Ned too was not displeased to have a third person, to enliven those serious *tête-à-têtes* he had with his father. All parties were pleased ; and the introduction of tea, and an enormous plate of toast swimming in butter, contributed to make this evening much more agreeable than the two last, particularly as they were now rid of the awful spectacle which before occupied great part of the room : and the poor lady above having been more composed than she had hitherto been, they gave way to the pleasing hope that she was on the mending hand.

They spent a couple of hours together, cheerfully and innocently, without being interrupted

interrupted by any message from above stairs; and then Mrs. Watkin rising to go home, Ned said he would attend her. She had a boy and horses with her; but this did not prevent Ned from seeing her to her own house. He rode the horse which carried Miss Watkin, who remained at his father's; and having delivered Mrs. Watkin safe into the hands of her husband, he left the horse and returned home on foot.

Mr. Evans always concluded Sunday evening with family prayer. Miss Watkin and Mrs. Evans went up as soon as it was over; and he retired with his son to bed, where in a few minutes they were both found asleep.

C H A P. V.

THERE is a great affinity between the chapters of a novel and the acts of a play—they are so many pauses in the narration, which should always be determined by similar pauses in the story they relate or represent. I do not, indeed, think it necessary, as some great critics, and particularly the French, pretend, that the whole story of a play should be confined, with respect to the possibility of its happening, to the exact space and time of the representation; at the same time I confess, that the liberties which the immortal Shakespear often takes, of crowding years into minutes, and hurrying us from one country to another, are equally unnatural and disgusting.

I could admit almost of any liberty in this respect, provided there is a pause in the representation. The judicious distribution of plays into five separate acts, and
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the music which intervenes, relieves the attention, and enables the poet to take advantage of that circumstance to carry the audience where he will, without shocking probability, because I can allow any time to pass while the representation is suspended ; and, at the beginning of a new act, it is equal to me whether I am set down in England or in France.—It is the same way in novels, which indeed, being read and not represented, admit of greater latitude as to the unities of place and time than plays, yet are not wholly free from restraint, but to be agreeable must be natural, and never shock the mind by any thing highly improbable, nor distract it by too often shifting the story from one country to another ;—and wherever this is necessary to be done, it should be contrived in separate books or chapters, where the narration naturally pauses, and suffers nothing by the interruption.

I have been led into this digression by reflecting on the conclusion of my three last chapters

chapters or acts, wherein I have judiciously laid all my actors fast asleep; and if the events I am relating have not sufficient merit to interest the attention of my readers, I heartily and sincerely wish they may have the power to lay them in the same condition; since, next to being usefully employed or agreeably entertained, I know no state more delightful than sound sleep—and, indeed, I have heard some, who very seldom could procure it, say they preferred it to any entertainment whatsoever. If any of my readers, therefore, should experience this benefit, let them not on that account decry the work—but, with due gratitude to the author, recommend it to others as an opiate full as effectual, and far more safe than laudanum or poppies.

It is now time for Mr. Edward to shake off his poppies; and accordingly we must now behold him rising early in the morning, and carefully getting out of bed, lest he should disturb his good father, who was still snoring. As soon as he was dressed,

dressed, he went out to the stable, to get the horse ready to go to Conway. Ned loved horses, and was as fond of handling them himself, and as skilful in every thing that belonged to them, as if he had been bred a groom. He combed and curried old Blackbird, till he made him look as spruce and as glossy as the bird whose name he bore; and having got Morgan to black his boots, and to clean his plated spurs, he seemed as neatly equipped for the saddle as any young man need to be. He then returned to the house in order to enquire about the lady, and, if his father was awake, to ask if he had any commands to Conway. He went up to his mother's room, and tapping at the door, it was opened by Mrs. Evans. From her he learned that the lady had been composed most of the night, and she hoped had got some sleep; but that she never spoke except when once or twice she had asked for a little drink. He now went down with the intention of seeing his father; but before he approached the door,

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he was informed by the music of his nose that he was still asleep; wherefore, unwilling to disturb him, he went to the stable; and taking out old Blackbird, who had just finished a good feed of oats, he patted him awhile on the neck, and then, vaulting into the saddle, rode off.

When he came to Conway, he found the doctor and his wife ready to receive him; the tea-things were spread upon the table, and they only waited his arrival to bring in the kettle, which was followed by a large plate of toast and butter, and another with boiled eggs. After mutual compliments and enquiries about the lady, they sat down to breakfast, where Ned, whose appetite was increased by his ride, did due honour to what was provided for him: he demolished, indeed, more than half the toast, together with four of the eggs, and washed them down with a proportionable quantity of tea.

When breakfast was finished, the doctor and Ned proceeded to the jail, to see the
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unfortunate man who was confined there, and to try to discover if he was one of the villains who were the authors of the tragical event that happened a few evenings before. This was the first time in his life that Edward had ever been within the doors of a prison; and though he had nothing to apprehend from it for himself, yet his feelings were too delicate, his heart too tender, to suffer him to enter it without concern. This was much increased when he was introduced into the room where the man was confined. The wretched and gloomy look of this receptacle of guilt and misery struck him with a universal horror. It was a small room dimly illuminated by a diminutive and dirty window, raised high from the ground, and secured by an iron grating within and without. The few gleams of light which were able to penetrate through the crust of filth with which the glass was covered, served only to discover sights of woe. The walls were bare plaster, which, in most places, was mouldering

dering away ; they had once been white-washed, but smoke and damp had everywhere so discoloured them that nothing like white could be seen. There was, indeed, a fire-place in the room, with a few small rusty bars by way of a grate ; but not a spark of fire, nor any appearance of there having been any for years, though the season of the year and the dampness greatly required one. An old and broken truckle bed, with some straw in it, lay in a dark corner ; and on this was the miserable object whom they came to see stretched, shivering under a tattered blanket, when they entered the room. “ Good God ! ” thought Ned in his own mind, “ should this man be innocent, what amends can be made to him for placing him in this miserable situation ? ” Again the supposition that he fired the guilty shot, by which an innocent lady was already dead, and another in imminent hazard of her life, suppressed these tender emotions, and raised a conflict in his mind, which was strongly pictured in

in his countenance, but which would be extremely difficult either to paint or to describe. The doctor, to whom scenes of horror were more familiar, approached the bed, and, calling to the prisoner, told him there was a young gentleman that wished to see him. The man raised himself on his arm, and discovered a face on which calamity was deeply engraven. His appearance was fordid and filthy, for he had not been washed since he was committed: he had on a black wig, that seemed not to fit him, and to be much the worse for the wear; and then rolling his gloomy eye-ball upon Edward, he asked, in an indignant and surly tone, what business he had with him?

Ned was somewhat staggered with the question:—but soon recovering himself, replied, that perhaps he might have no business at all with him, and he sincerely wished it might be so; but that depended on his own innocence or guilt:—that a few evenings before, a most barbarous and atrocious murder had been committed on an un-

happy lady by two highwaymen; and that another lady, who had been with her, was then in great danger of her life:—that Providence had brought him to their assistance, and that he himself had given one of the villains such a blow on the head as brought him to the ground, though he afterwards escaped; and that, hearing a suspicious person had been taken up, he had desired to see him, to know whether he could recollect him. “Well,” said the fellow, “what do you know of me, now you see me?” “Why I confess,” said Ned, “I cannot say that I know any thing of you.” “Then by what right is it that I am kept here starving with hunger and with cold? Since you know nothing about me, you should go to the man that put me up here, and desire him to release me, and pay me besides for the injury I have suffered in being put here:—but, damn you and him together! you are both of you greater rogues than I am, or you could not have done so to an innocent man.” “Friend,” said Evans,

Evans, " I have nothing to do either with your commitment or release:—if you are indeed an innocent man, you have nothing to apprehend, and doubtless a satisfaction will be made you; but let me tell you, that the intemperance of your tongue does not look like innocence, which, shielded by its own rectitude, disdains so weak and so indecent a defence: the magistrate who committed you is a man of equal integrity and humanity, infinitely above the reach of any aspersion that such a tongue as yours can level at him; he shall be sent for to examine you further while I am here, and he is the only person authorised to decide on the propriety of releasing or detaining you."

Whilst Ned was thus haranguing the prisoner, the doctor had slipped out of the room, and now returned with the jailor. They then questioned the jailor respecting the want of food and other comforts, which the prisoner had complained of. The jailor replied, that as for fire there was no

provision made for it by the county, and that the man had refused to pay for any, and therefore he wanted it; but that for food, he had sent him some of his own dinner, which the other, in a fit of fullness, had also refused, and damned the person that carried it to him; so that, if he wanted necessaries, it was entirely his own fault. To all this the prisoner made no reply, but sat sullen on the bed-side; the jailor, approaching him, said he had better wash and shave himself. "You shall have a shirt of my own," he said, "while yours is washed; and if you will give me your wig here," said he, "I will get it combed." This he said by agreement with the doctor, and at the same time attempted to take it off his head; but it was tied under his chin. The fellow, upon feeling the attempt upon his wig, got up in a rage, and, clapping both his hands to it, "Damn you!" said he, "have you a mind to rob me of the little I have left? There's ne'er a one of you, by G—, shall take my wig, without taking

taking my life first." The jailor was not at all discomfited by this declaration: "As for your wig," says he, "I care nothing about it; but, by G—, I'll see what colour your hair is of." And so saying, he pulled harder at the bob, which, however, was too well fastened to give way; which the doctor observing, he, in an instant, cut the string with a pair of his anatomical scissars, and transferred the wig from the head of the prisoner to the fist of the jailor; and then, indeed, was discovered what was suspected before—the large and very visible marks of a recent contusion. "Hey!" said the doctor, "what is the matter here? Why, here's a large wound. How have you got this desperate bruise, and why have not you applied for assistance?" The fellow seemed a good deal confounded; but replied, that he had got it by a fall from his horse; and as for doctors, he never applied to them, for he hated them, and every thing that belonged to them. "They are obliged to you," replied Jones; "never-

theless I will mend this broken head for you, and it shall cost you nothing neither." He then offered to examine it ; but the fellow positively refused, and desired him to stand off, for he should not lay a finger near it. " Well," said Jones, " you may do as you please just now ; but the justice who committed you will soon be here, and then, in his presence, and in the presence of his attendants, I will examine it whether you will or no." The doctor and Ned then left the room, and adjourned to the jailor's apartment, when they sent for the justice, and told him all the circumstances that have been related ; as well those respecting the robbery, as those relative to the suspicious conduct of the prisoner. After about an hour's conversation, they agreed to go in and re-examine the prisoner, attended by some of the inferior officers of justice, in case any assistance of theirs might be necessary. This precaution, though prudent, was now unnecessary ; for, whether awed by the consciousness of guilt, the new circum-

circumstance against him that had been discovered, the solemnity of the appearance of the magistrate, or the natural depression of his spirits, the prisoner had now lost every appearance of opposition, and sat on the bed-side in a state of utter despondence. The justice observed his weakness; and, being a man of the tenderest humanity, he asked him if he was ill? The prisoner said, he was ill indeed; for he had not tasted food for two days. The justice told him, that no advantage should be taken of him; and though he came to examine him, he would wait till he was more composed. He then withdrew again to the room he had left, and ordered the jailor to carry to the unfortunate prisoner some bread and a pint of warm wine. After he had taken this refreshment, and some time had been allowed him to recollect himself, the justice (attended as before) and the gentlemen went in to him.

I shall not now trouble the reader with his examination, or his answers, which were

evasive and unsatisfactory. The doctor, after examining the wound, pronounced that it could not have been got by a fall from a horse, as it was on a part of the head on which it was next to an impossibility to pitch by such an accident : but it might very well have been got by a blow of a stick, which it resembled much more ; and as such a blow had been given to one of the persons concerned in the robbery, there was the greatest reason to believe the prisoner was that person. The justice summed up the incongruities in his account of himself ; and further added, that his horse was in custody as well as himself, and that, in all probability, such further evidence would in a short time appear as would effectually condemn him if he was guilty ; and it was already so strong as to make it impossible for him to release him from prison. He therefore seriously and earnestly exhorted him, if he knew himself guilty, not to deprive himself of the merit of making a full and voluntary confession ;
 which

which would turn out greatly to his advantage, and which, he pledged himself, he should not lose the benefit of. "If," says he, "you are the person who was knocked down, it is evident you are not the person who fired the shot; and if you will give such information as can bring that murderer to justice, you shall be admitted evidence for the crown, and obtain his majesty's pardon."

This last promise had the desired effect. The unhappy man, whose heart was now softened, and who had seemed infinitely touched by the tenderness and the humanity of the justice, now burst into a flood of tears; and, with a tremulous and broken voice, confessed he was the person who was knocked down. "You have done well to confess it," replied the justice: "and now remember that you tell fairly and fully who you are, and who the wretch is that was confederated with you, that he may be brought to justice; for on the faith-

fulness of this confession, and the truth of your report concerning your accomplice, depends your own life, and my power of making good the promise I have given you."

C H A P. VI.

“MY name,” said the unfortunate man, “is Andrew Collins ; I am the only child of my mother, and she is a widow. I was born at Chester, and am, or rather lately was, servant to Mr. Nicholson, an eminent cloth-merchant there. Mr. Nicholson is an Irishman by birth, but is settled at Chester, and is at present in London. When he first came to live at Chester, about ten years ago, he brought with him a young lad from his own country, to live with him as a servant, and he did every thing he could to make him a faithful and a skilful one. For some years he did pretty well ; but as he grew up to be a man, he became idle and negligent, then drunken and extravagant, and at last wicked and abandoned, in every respect.

“ His master bore with him till it was not possible to bear him any longer ; and at

last, about six months ago, he turned him out of his house, and would have nothing more to say to him. I happened to be hired in his place; and if I had had any grace or fear of God, I might have been happy; but, alas! I have been seduced to ruin—seduced against my sense, nay almost against my will, and all by that wicked servant, for he it is that was my tempter and my accomplice. His name is Patrick Reilly; but he sometimes calls himself Maguire, and sometimes Flanagan, but his real name is Reilly. He is of a very strong make, a very daring courage, and of a fierce and bloody temper: though he will do any thing to get money, yet he cares little about it when he has it, but spends it in idleness and debauchery, with a show of generosity; and, alas! it was this show that has undone me.

“I never knew any thing about him till I unfortunately succeeded him in his place: he soon after contrived to get acquainted with me, and, instead of hating me as I expected, he seemed to be fond of me, and
used

used to praise my master and own his own faults; and he often gave me good advice how to please him, and how to get about him, as he called it, which I always found successful, and I thought him the best friend I had;—but all this was to serve his own end, and his revenge.

“ When he had got me to love him and think well of him, he would often, when there was an opportunity, treat me to liquor, and sometimes he would introduce me to some of his female acquaintances, and even give me money to pay for the favours those despicable wretches were to grant; in short, he won me to his purposes, first by affection, and then by fear;—for twice or thrice I saw him give very stout men, who had offended him, such desperate beatings, that I own I felt myself like nothing before him, and did not dare to contradict whatever he might propose. I observed he was always flush of money, though I could not tell how he came by it, nor did I ever dare to ask him; but he had from time to time given me so much, that I began to
 6 think,

think, if he should happen to ask me for it, that my whole wages would not be sufficient to repay it. This gave me great uneasiness; and, from the moment that I felt myself in his power, I lost my peace, my happiness, and at last my innocence.

“ I resolved to disentangle myself from him as soon as I could, but I did not know how to do it; and once that he began to grow angry at my refusing to go with him, he terrified me into instant obedience, and obliged me to ask his pardon, though I knew not for what. From that moment I was lost. He saw my condition, and did not fail to take advantage of it.

“ About a week ago, my master went up in the coach to London, and left the two maids and me to take care of the house; he is not expected back this fortnight to come. The day after he went, Reilly called upon me, and asked me if I could let him have the money he lent me, for he had a sum to pay, and was in great want. I was thunderstruck at his demand; and assured him I had not half a guinea in my possession :

flon: but I told him that, as soon as my master came back, I would ask him for some, and that I would give him every shilling I got. ‘Oh, damn your master!’ said he, ‘that won’t do for me; he mayn’t come this month!—I want my money to-night! Don’t think to put me off with that sham; but get me the money, or the money’s worth, by eight o’clock to-night, for by G—I must have it! and you may expect to see me then for it.’ So saying, he went off, and left me in a condition that if the earth had opened and swallowed me up, it would have rejoiced me. I knew it was impossible to get the money, or any thing like it—and indeed I never went about it; but I passed all the rest of the day in a state of stupid terror and distress that it is impossible to describe. At length eight o’clock came, and soon after I heard a knock at the door, which I knew to be Reilly’s; and I went to open it with a heart beating against my breast, so that I could hardly breathe.

“When

“ When I let him in, and he saw the condition I was in, he burst out a-laughing— ‘ What is the matter with you, man?’ said he, ‘ You look as if you saw a ghost!’ I was not able to give him an answer. ‘ Is it because I asked you for the money,’ said he, ‘ that you are so frightened?’ ‘ Why yes,’ said I, in a faltering voice; ‘ I have it not, nor do I know where to get it; but if you leave me the clothes on my back, which are my master’s, you may take every thing else I have in the world.’ ‘ No, damn it!’ said Reilly, ‘ I’ll not be so hard-hearted as that neither; you are an honest fellow, and I love you as my friend; and as for the money, you will pay me when you can. I have got a supply for the present, I did not expect; and I came to tell you the good news, and to ask you to come to my lodging and to drink a bowl of punch with me, where, if you are an honest cock, and my friend, I’ll shew you how to make us both happy all our days.” It is not possible for words to express what I felt at this speech.

The

The suddenness of the relief, the surprise and joy that flowed in upon me, was more than I was able to bear; and I should have fallen to the floor, if Reilly had not caught me in his arms. As I hung upon his neck in a transport of joy and gratitude, I told him I would serve him with my life, and go with him to the end of the earth.

“ Oh, fatal folly ! Oh, dreadful and irremediable guilt ! It is not yet a week since I slept in innocence and peace !—a little week since my hands were pure, and my character unstained ! Alas ! my mother ! my aged, my helpless, my widowed mother ! It is not yet a week since you saw your child in freedom, in guiltless freedom, and gave him your blessing. What will you do when you hear that in one hour he is become a robber and a murderer ?—a disgraced and deserved outcast from all society ! ”

This affecting apostrophe brought tears into the eyes of the humane justice, and seemed to make some impression even on the stony

stony hearts of those subaltern myrmidons of the law, by whom he was surrounded. The unhappy man himself seemed to be in an agony not to be described ; and Ned stood with his hands folded together, contemplating him with a silent and a sorrowing eye.

The justice first broke silence.—“ Your guilt and your misfortunes,” said he, “ unhappy man, are great ; but if I can judge of others by myself, they will not be thought unworthy of compassion. It is your happiness that your career in wickedness has been cut short by an early detection ; and if you have the grace to be sorry for your sin, and to forsake it, you may be yet restored to some degree of comfort even in this life. In the mean time, it is your duty, as well as your interest, to proceed faithfully in your narrative, which is the best atonement you can make to your country, and which, as far as I have heard, seems candid and deserves credit.”

The prisoner then continued his narrative ;

“ In

“ In an evil hour I consented to go with him; he soon got a good supper, with plenty of spirits and wine, and plied me with both till he had got me well warmed for any business he had to propose. At length he ventured to break the affair; he told me his father and mother lived in Ireland, where they had a good farm; and that he had a sister who was a great beauty; that my master was a great rogue, and was worth a deal of money, which he made by wronging other people; that he knew very well where he kept a large sum; and that if I would only keep out of the way, and give him the key of the iron box in which the plate was kept, and of which he knew I had the charge, he would contrive to carry off the whole; and that it could never appear that I had any hand in it whatever; and that then he would carry me to Ireland, where I should marry his sister, and he would give me half of the spoils to set me up with.

“ Had this been proposed to me in my
sober

sober senses, I believe I should have had virtue enough to withstand it : even as it was, it both terrified and shocked me. I told him I could not think of joining to rob a man who had never done me wrong ; and though I might be so lucky as to escape the gallows, yet I could not conceal my wickedness from God, who would surely judge me for it in the next world, if not in this. He laughed at the idea of the next world, and said he did not believe there was any such place ; ‘ but if there is,’ said he, ‘ ’tis easy enough to make peace there. God knows your master is a great rogue, so do I ; and perhaps he may put this into my head to be a means of punishing him, and then we are only his instruments ;—and besides, your master is a protestant and a heretic, and it is no sin to rob a heretic ; and indeed I might be afraid myself, but I know, if there is any truth in religion at all, that the church has power to forgive sins—not your church, which is a heretic church—but the old and true church, the church of Rome ;

Rome ; and I know that Father Dogherty, as good a priest as ever lived, will give me absolution for half-a-crown ; and he will do the same for you if you will be a good catholic, so that you will not only make your fortune, but save your soul too.'

" I was not so drunk, nor yet so ignorant, but that I could see the weakness and the wickedness of this argument. Reilly perceived too that I was not satisfied : ' I'll tell you what,' said he, ' to cut the matter short, I am determined to do the thing. I love you, therefore I offered you to give you share of the booty ; and as an earnest of it, I forgive you what you owe me, and here are ten guineas more for you in your fist. But remember that you do as I desire you ; for I have trusted you with my secret ; and if you don't do as I bid you, by the living G— I will take care of you, and put you where you can tell no tales ; and I shall get absolution for that too.'

" This last threat, which I fully understood, harrowed up my soul. I saw myself
wholly

wholly in his power, and do not make the smallest doubt but that he would really have murdered me as he threatened, if I had any longer refused him: so with an aching and an unwilling heart I consented. He was too cunning to let me cool upon it; he detained me with him the whole night, and at length put me into his own bed in a state of complete intoxication.

“ In the morning he did not fail to make me renew my promise, as he did his threat in case I failed: and I went to my master, sick both in body and mind. The eldest of the maids saw I had been drinking, and chid me severely for staying out; and said she would tell my master if ever I did so any more. I promised I would not; but I said I was so sick I was afraid I was going to have a fever, and that I would go home to my mother, and if I was better, I would return the next day. They both endeavoured to dissuade me from this; but it being my purpose to be out of the way, I persisted, and went.

“ I called

“ I called on Reilly, gave him the key, and told him where to find me. I then went to my mother, and staid there all night.— How I passed that night I cannot describe, nor never shall forget. Every time I looked at my mother, the consciousness of my guilt stung me to the soul. Her tender assiduities wrung me to the heart, when I thought of the sorrow and the shame I was preparing for her grey hairs ! When the hour came in which I knew the mischief would be doing, my agony was inexpressible, and such as I can never again suffer, though I should be executed for the crime.

“ Early in the morning I called on Reilly, but he was not at his lodging. I then went home to my master's, where I found all in confusion. The two maids were at their wit's end—they told me all that had happened, and upbraided me with being out of the way ; and the eldest did not scruple to say that she was sure the villain Reilly was the author of it ; and that, as I was his companion of late, she did not doubt but I had
gone

gone out of the way on purpose. This last accusation, so just and so direct, shocked me like a stroke of lightning. I saw my folly to its full extent, and felt it to my soul. I cursed and swore, indeed, and denied it; but my guilt was in my face, and might be discerned by a less penetrating eye than hers. I knew indeed she could not prove it, but the suspicion was too just not to set me on providing for my safety.

“ I soon after went to Reilly’s again; and having informed him of what was said, and my fears about it, he agreed with me that it was not safe to remain, and that we should both set off that very day for Ireland. I did not hear a word of dividing the spoil; I don’t know what he got; and I never received a shilling more. He went out, desiring me to remain where I was till he came back. In about an hour he returned, and told me he had two horses ready saddled and bridled, and desired me to go off with him directly. I had now no other choice left; so off we went together, intending

tending to go across the country, and by round-about ways, till we came to the Head; and there to embark for Ireland.

“ Nothing remarkable happened to us till last Friday evening. The day was very bad, and we had stopped at Conway to refresh ourselves and our horses. Looking out at the window, we saw a post-chaise stop, with two ladies in it, and no servants attending. We soon found they were going on for the Head, notwithstanding the stormy night; and their defenceless situation first put it into Reilly’s head to rob them. I was absolutely at his disposal; he ordered me therefore to get ready, and that we should ride on before to meet them, as it were, when it was dark. He desired me to attack the women, and as I had no arms, he gave me a pen-case, which he said was just as good for them; and as for himself, who had a blunderbuss, he said he would take care of the postillions, that they should be no interruption. All that happened in consequence you know. I found myself

knocked down, and I heard the shot go off; but murder was no part of my plan. I got nothing. In the darkness and confusion I escaped for that time; and recovering the horse, I returned to Conway in search of Reilly: but I have never seen nor heard of him since; nor do I know whose the horses are, nor any thing about them.

“ This, gentlemen, is my whole story, and I will seal it with my dying words. I am thankful that I have been early detected, and that I am rescued from the tyranny of Reilly, even by the gallows. But if his majesty should vouchsafe to extend mercy to me, the rest of my life shall be spent in prayers for him, and in endeavours to atone to my country for my great transgression.”

The justice told him, he was glad to see that his misfortunes seemed to have made a proper impression on him: that it was necessary for him to be detained in custody, but that he should not want either for compassion or necessaries while he was there. He applauded

ed the candour of his confession, and desired him to commit it to writing, and to sign it; and that he himself would take care it should redound to his advantage. He then returned to his own house, and Edward went with the doctor to his; from whence they soon after set forward together on horseback for Mr. Evans's.

C H A P. VII.

WHEN they arrived at the gate, that worthy man went out to meet them with his accustomed hospitality: he welcomed the doctor, but with a chastised pleasure, and so visible a discomposure of countenance as greatly alarmed both him and Ned. "Has any thing happened?" said the doctor; "and how is my unfortunate patient?" "She is alive," said Evans, "but, I fear, fast approaching to her dissolution." The doctor said no more, but went up immediately to her chamber; whilst Ned, with an aching heart and trembling steps, followed his father into the parlour. "What," said he, "my dear Sir, (after sitting a little while) "what new symptom has arisen since I went away, that makes you despair of the poor lady's recovery?" "Alas, my child!" said he, "she is, I fear, past all recovery. God is going to take her to himself, and
to

to reward her sufferings in a better world. I have seen her," continued he—"seen her lie all senseless and forlorn, wholly unconscious even of existence; she has been in this state the whole day, and could not be roused to the smallest sensibility even for a moment. I am glad the doctor is come; for though I have no hope that his skill can avail any thing, yet it will be a consolation to have him in the house, and I do not mean to let him go till all is over."

Ned's eyes witnessed to his feelings by some silent drops which trickled on his cheeks. He then gave his father a particular account of all that has been already related respecting the prisoner at Conway; which Mr. Evans heard with much satisfaction, particularly Collins's contrition, and trusting that it would be the means of bringing the arch-villain Reilly to condign punishment. "In all my time," said he, "I never knew, nor heard of, murder escaping unpunished. God seems to have marked this dreadful crime for particular

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vengeance

vengeance even in this life; and let it be perpetrated ever so cunningly or secretly, it always is discovered. Should other means be wanting to find it out, there have been instances where the wretched perpetrators themselves, unable to bear the stings of conscience, and the horrors of remorse, have voluntarily surrendered themselves to justice; and fled to death itself, and a public execution, as a refuge from the terrors of their guilty minds. How gracious is God! and what a proof of his wisdom and mercy does it afford, when we consider that this unerring monitor is implanted in every breast! that we cannot deviate in the smallest degree from our duty, without feeling its checks, and being sensible of the divinity within us! While you live then, my dear boy, listen to this sacred advice; it is the voice of God speaking to your soul, which, if you will obey, will always speak to you peace and comfort, and, in the end, conduct you to ineffable happiness and glory."

While?

Whilst Evans was thus moralizing with his son, Miss Watkin came down stairs to get something the doctor wanted. Neither of the gentlemen could muster up courage enough to ask about the unfortunate lady: but Ned, whose tenderness was extreme, and who could no longer bear the suspense he was in, stole after her up stairs, and went with her into the room. He stood for a while motionless at the foot of the bed, silently contemplating its pale inhabitant. Her eyes were half open, but they saw nothing; the paleness of death sat upon her countenance, which nevertheless was still beautiful; and a soft complacency was diffused over all her features, as if she was happy in the prospect of being soon in heaven. "Whoever thou art," said he, "unfortunate young lady! earth never bred a fairer form, nor sent to heaven a more unpolluted soul than thine." He took one look at her, which he firmly believed to be the last; and, without saying a word to any person in the room, retired to his own

chamber, to give vent to that sorrow which was visible in his eyes, and which a much less feeling heart than his could not suppress.

Here he remained fixed in meditation, till the maid came to summon him to dinner. He would gladly have been excused going; but, thinking it would look particular, he went into the parlour, and partook of a cheerless meal, at which little was said and less was eaten. When the cloth was removed, and a glass or two of ale had gone round, Ned ventured to ask the doctor if it was possible for the lady to recover. He replied, that nothing was impossible to God; and that while there was life in her he would continue to do every thing in his power for her; but he confessed he had very little hopes, for, in all his practice, he had never seen any one in a more alarming situation. Mr. Evans then requested the doctor would not leave the lady till all was determined one way or other. The doctor said he would not; and that he would sit up
with

with her himself this night, to watch the operation of blisters which he had put on several parts of her body.

When night came, the doctor and the ladies retired to the sick apartment; and Mr. Evans and Ned continued sitting in the parlour. The anxiety of their minds had banished all thoughts of sleep; and though Mr. Evans pressed Ned to go to his bed, yet that amiable youth would not quit his father, but chose to sit up with him to endeavour to cheer him through the silence of the night, and to receive in his turn the consolation and instruction which he knew he should find in the conversation of his father on this solemn occasion. For several hours they sat without hearing the smallest stir; their conversation turned, as might be expected, on the sublime truths of Christianity, the nature of death, the immortality of the soul, and the several proofs of it that might be drawn from reason, exclusive of revelation. In this serious and instructive manner did they

pass the greatest part of the night, without any interruption: the clock struck four, and soon after they heard the room-door open, and the doctor's foot upon the stairs.

All their apprehensions were now awakened; they longed, though they dreaded, to see him enter the parlour; and in this awful moment of suspense, a by-stander might have seen, that neither philosophy, nor even religion itself, could wholly subdue the feelings of nature. Notwithstanding their sublime conversation, and their thorough belief of the great gain that death is to the virtuous, they were struck with terror when the door opened, and were unable for a while even to speak. At length Evans found his tongue: "Is all over?" said he. "I hope all is over," replied the doctor. "The lady lives—and I can pronounce her better. The blisters have risen; and she has recovered sense—she has just asked for drink, and taken some wine whey, and I could not delay communicating to you these happy tidings."

The

The joy that now flowed in upon them, was equal to the despondence with which they were before oppressed. Ned's eyes, which were always the ready interpreters of his heart, bore witness to his satisfaction ; whilst the venerable Evans, referring this blessing to the Bestower of all blessings poured out his thanksgivings on his knees. And, indeed, it was the constant custom of this truly pious and excellent man to betake himself to his Maker on every occasion of importance, whether of joy or sorrow. He had a thorough faith, that all the events of this life were guided by an all-disposing Providence, though not absolutely predetermined so as to supersede the freedom of the will : but he believed that the Lord of nature, who at one view could comprehend the whole universe, and direct all the movements in it, did often, if not always, interpose his providence, although in doing so he made use of second and natural causes ; and where men were studious to recommend themselves to him, and faith-

ful enough sincerely to rely on him, he did further believe that all events were directed for their real interest; and though they might appear ever so untoward, yet in the end they would be conducive to lasting happiness. And indeed it would not be easy for the most acute philosopher to disprove this doctrine; for it must be allowed that the comfort and satisfaction which good men would derive from this belief, would diffuse over their whole lives such contentment and tranquillity as all the storms of adversity could never destroy. And such indeed was the influence it had on the mind of Evans, who, according to the common opinions of the world, might well be reckoned a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but whose internal comforts arising from integrity of heart and purity of faith were so great, that they were ever visible both in his countenance and temper; and it may well be doubted if there was really a man in the kingdom more truly happy than himself. Certain it is, he was completely so at this moment :

moment : his satisfaction arose from the purest source, the most open and unbounded benevolence ; and now being relieved from the great anxiety which depressed them in the beginning of the night, he and Ned retired for the remainder of it to rest, and the doctor returned to his attendance on the lady.

C H A P. VIII.

I HOPE my readers, if they have had patience to come to the beginning of this chapter, are by this time somewhat interested in the story, and that they are longing to know who the unfortunate lady is, that I have endeavoured to recommend to their attention, and for whose recovery all that were about her seem so much concerned. She is as yet unknown even at Mr. Evans's, and perhaps it may be her desire to continue for some time longer in obscurity; though certainly no young lady whatever has less reason to shun the public eye, as none could surpass her either in beauty or virtue. The only motive she can have for wishing to be some time longer concealed, arises from the very cause that would make a lady less delicate and considerate ambitious of declaring herself, namely, her rank.

But

But though this might be a reason to a mind like hers, to keep Evans in the dark, because she hated to give trouble, or to oppress her inferiors with the splendour of her title, yet it can be none with me to deny that satisfaction to the reader ;—and I shall therefore take this opportunity, while the venerable curate and his family are asleep, and are therefore in no danger of overhearing us, to disclose the secret.

Lady Cecilia Rivers was the only daughter of the Earl of Ravensdale, in Ireland, and had at this time nearly completed her eighteenth year. To Nature she was indebted for a form absolutely perfect, and for a mind every way suited to such a form. To her father she was obliged for a most finished education. His lordship was born a younger brother, and, having married early in life, was once blessed with a numerous family of children. He succeeded to the title on the death of his elder brother, about fourteen years before the commencement of this history.

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The late lord had an only son, who had the misfortune to displease his father by marrying contrary to his consent; on which account he never would see him afterwards. He died, as his wife did also, about five years before his father, leaving a new-born son, who was said to have also died at nurse; and, on the demise of the late lord, Lady Cecilia's father succeeded of course. He had a clear landed estate of 16,000*l.* a year, which he enjoyed with dignity and œconomy, and was universally supposed to possess as much honour, humanity, and virtue, as any nobleman in the kingdom. He had the misfortune to lose his lady soon after his accession to the title, when Lady Cecilia, who was his youngest child, was yet an infant; and of all his numerous family there now remained only her ladyship and two brothers. Her eldest brother, Lord Rivers, who was heir to the title and estate, was at this time about twenty-five years of age; and her second brother, about twenty-two, was a captain in the army.

The

The death of Lady Ravensdale, when her daughter Lady Cecilia was little more than four years of age, was a great blow to her lord, who tenderly loved her, and would have been severely felt by the children, had it not been for the tender and parental care of Mrs. Melville, the unfortunate conclusion of whose life we have already related.

This lady was a near relation of Lady Ravensdale, to whom she was extremely attached : she had been married to a gentleman of small fortune, but great accomplishments ; and whilst they lived together, they were universally considered to be one of the happiest as well as the most elegant pairs that ever love had united in matrimony. But, alas ! this happiness was of too short duration, and Mr. Melville, at an early period of his life, fell a sacrifice to his affection for his wife. It happened that they were one night at the theatre, when, towards the end of the entertainment, there was an alarm in the house, of fire ! In a short time
the

the flames were seen bursting out among the scenes ; and the dreadful confusion that ensued, by every body crowding to get out, was the occasion of many lives being lost which might otherwise have been saved. They happened to be in the stage box, and Mr. Melville, whose presence of mind never forsook him in danger, was well aware that it was impossible to escape by the ordinary passages to the boxes ; he took therefore the desperate resolution of jumping on the stage with his wife in his arms, and bore her through the flames to the back of the house, which he knew communicated with the manager's dwelling, and was fortunate enough to deposit her in a place of safety without any material injury from the fire. But the terror, the heat, and the hurry of his spirits, together with being obliged to walk home in the night, neither his own nor any other carriage being to be got in the confusion, threw him into a fever, of which he died, to the inexpressible affliction of his disconsolate widow, who it was thought for a long time would not
be

be able to survive him. At length however she recovered, and possessed a jointure from her husband of 300l. a year, which, as she had no child, was in Ireland a sufficient income for a single woman of fashion to live tolerably comfortable on, especially as she had many friends to whose houses she was ever a most welcome guest.

Her summers she usually spent with Lord and Lady Ravensdale, at their seat in the country ; but the winters she passed in Dublin, where she had a small but very neat house in one of the new streets in the neighbourhood of Merrion-square.

Some time after Lady Ravensdale's death, she was prevailed upon by my Lord to supply her place to her infant children ; and Lady Cecilia, the youngest, coming more particularly under her care, she transferred the affection she had for the mother to the daughter, and really felt for her a parental tenderness : under her forming hand she grew perfect in every polite attainment, whilst the excellence of her understanding,

and

and the native sweetness of her disposition, gave additional lustre to the surpassing beauties of her person.

Lord Ravensdale had a sister, Lady Elizabeth Belmont, who was married to an English gentleman of large fortune, and who lived wholly in that kingdom. This lady had not seen her niece since she was a child; but hearing much of her beauty and accomplishments, she wished exceedingly for that pleasure, and to introduce her into the first circles, and to all the splendid amusements of the metropolis of the empire. She had therefore, in the autumn, written pressing to Lord Ravensdale, and also to Lady Cecilia, inviting her to spend the winter with her in London; and she wrote at the same time to Mrs. Melville, requesting her to accompany her. Lord Ravensdale could not refuse this request, so proper in itself, and which promised to be so agreeable to Lady Cecilia also. The two ladies therefore had accepted the invitation, and gone over in the month of September. Lord Rivers,
Lady

Lady Cecilia's brother, had escorted them all the way, and delivered them safe to Lady Elizabeth Belmont, at her house in Berkeley-square ; but his attendance in the Irish parliament (where he was a commoner) being necessary, he was obliged to return soon after to Dublin.

Lady Cecilia and Mrs. Melville were received by Mr. Belmont and Lady Elizabeth with all the affection and politeness they could desire ; and perhaps if Lady Cecilia had had less beauty, or her aunt had lived in a less splendid circle of gaiety and fashion, they might have passed a very agreeable winter, and the amiable Mrs. Melville been still living. But Providence, who from causes the most common, and seemingly the most trivial, often deduces the most important consequences, thought fit to determine otherwise. For some time, indeed, the novelty of the scenes amused ; and Lady Cecilia, who was the very soul of elegance, could not fail to find in London whatever could delight her fancy, or improve her taste. Had she been
in

in her own house, or her amusements left to her own choice, this would undoubtedly have been the case; but in her aunt's house she was under the necessity of conforming to her mode of living, and of choosing her amusements and her company by her direction, which, as their education and sentiments were widely different, were not always entirely such as Lady Cecilia approved. She could not all at once divest herself of her love of tranquillity, and of those calm and soothing pleasures which an elegant and refined mind seeks within itself, and enjoys most when it is alone, or in the company of a few and select friends. The eternal round of dissipation, however fashionable, and the perpetual return of the same amusements, however splendid, though they pleased at first, soon lost their charm, and at length grew fatiguing:—just like the insipid amusement of Ranelagh, where all are astonished at the splendour and magnitude of the room on their first entrance; but after passing a few hours, they find it little better

better than an enormous cock-pit, and are as much amused with the dull round of the circle as a horse in a mill. Even the theatres, where she might reasonably hope for entertainment, miserably deceived her; not indeed from any fault in them or the managers, but solely from the fashion; for she soon found that fine ladies go to the theatres, not to see, but to be seen; that the side-boxes, where they are condemned to sit, though favourable for the exhibition of themselves, is not so for seeing the play; that the company talk as much there as at any other assembly, and, except in a few instances, return home as ignorant of the entertainment as those who had never been at it.

After a few weeks therefore of fashionable dissipation, her curiosity was satisfied; the pleasures of London ceased to be agreeable when they were no longer new. She was not formed for the thoughtless hurry of what is called high-life: she was bred in retirement notwithstanding her rank, and
 she

she longed to return to the elegant but tranquil amusements which used to employ her at her father's house. But it was not the being satiated with London alone, which induced her so earnestly to long for the time of her return : she dreaded the addresses of a young nobleman, to whom her aunt had introduced her, and whose praises she was perpetually sounding in her ears ; yet in whom she could never see any thing to admire, but, on the contrary, had conceived a contempt for his person, his manners, and his sentiments.

As this nobleman was become a constant party in all Lady Elizabeth's entertainments, and as all his attentions which he did not bestow on himself were directed to Lady Cecilia, she found herself under the most disagreeable restraint ; while her respect for her aunt, and for the rank of her guest, obliged her to endure the society of a man whom she despised, and even to feign complacence in his company, that she might not discover her contempt. Her mind was of that

that generous openness, and her sense of honour and truth so delicate, that she could not bear any thing like dissimulation, even where the intent was praise-worthy ; and her situation would probably in a short time have become very disagreeable, had not a fit of the gout in the stomach, with which her father was attacked, furnished her with an excuse for quitting London long before the time she had originally intended. Her aunt pressed her to stay, and would have persuaded her that the fit would go off in a few days, as it had often done before : she was really sorry to part with her so soon, for she was justly proud of the sense, the beauty, and the virtues of her niece ; but Lady Cecilia would not hear of any delay, the reasons already mentioned co-operating with her filial affection to make her long to throw herself into the bosom of her father.

It was in pursuance of this intention that she left London, after taking an affectionate leave of Mr. Belmont and Lady Elizabeth ; and Mrs. Melville returning with her, they

pursued their journey without any molesta-
 tion, till that unhappy evening when that
 amiable woman lost her life, and the tender
 and affectionate Lady Cecilia, overwhelmed
 with grief and consternation, was conducted,
 by Ned's courage and activity, to the poor
 but friendly mansion of his father.

CHAP. IX.

IN the morning the family assembled together to breakfast ; and a visible joy was expressed in every countenance, when the doctor assured them that his patient was out of danger. As their anxiety for her life was now over, their next curiosity was to discover who she was. Various were their conjectures on this head ; some of them wide, and some not very remote from the truth : they all however agreed that, let her be who she would, she was an angel both in form and disposition ; and Evans, whose joy for her recovery knew no bounds, thanked Heaven for the accident that brought her to his house, and made him any ways instrumental to her comfort and satisfaction. The doctor told them that nothing would be now necessary for her but nourishing food and exercise ; that her

mind must be made as cheerful as possible; and for this reason, all enquiries about her family or situation, or any thing that could agitate her spirits, must be wholly let alone. "It is perfectly immaterial who she is," said he; "she is in distress, and moreover she is certainly a gentlewoman, and in every respect entitled to all that can be done for her. I would, therefore, ask her no questions, but leave it to herself to disclose her situation or not as she thinks proper." Mr. Evans entirely agreed with the doctor in all these sentiments; and the women were obliged to acquiesce, though it must be owned their curiosity was not a bit abated.

After breakfast the doctor took his leave, as his attendance was no longer necessary; but he promised to come frequently to see her, and to be ready in a moment if he should be wanted. Ned saddled his horse, and rode a part of the way with him; and the worthy Evans betook himself to his garden, which he had not visited before since this disastrous event took place. A

garden, to an elegant and philosophical mind, is one of the greatest amusements in the world; every beneficent and amiable passion is gratified in it; and it also answers the noblest moral purpose, when it lifts up the heart in gratitude and admiration to that great and benevolent Being, who there so profusely gratifies the senses of his creatures. Our Saviour himself suggests this to us, when he desires us to consider the lilies of the field; which, though they neither toil nor spin, yet surpass Solomon himself in the beauty of their raiment. Mr. Evans was extremely sensible of this beauty, and had from his earliest years addicted himself to the study of Nature, and to the pleasing and rational amusement of cultivating and adorning her wherever he had opportunity. Next to the improvement of the mind, he thought nothing more becoming than that of his garden, which he considered as the primitive employment of mankind, prescribed to our first parents by God himself, and therefore every way suitable to our nature, and to

pure unadulterated taste. His skill in the science was consummate; not only in the theory but practice, for he wrought in it himself, which he considered as a wholesome and pleasant exercise, in which his son often joined him when not employed in more important concerns.

The spot which he now possessed was beautifully situated for the purpose: it contained only about three acres, but was so agreeably diversified by the inequality of the ground, and by the winding walks which he had formed through it, as to appear of much greater extent; and you might walk miles in it without being tired, and even without being conscious that you were treading the same ground. All the flowers which our climates produce to perfection were here profusely scattered, and in such a manner as to appear the work of Nature, though in fact they were attended with the nicest care, and disposed by the most artful management, so as to contrast their colours, and set off their beauties to the best advantage.

vantage. There were no walls to this garden; for Mr. Evans did not go to the unnecessary expence of raising foreign fruits; he was contented with those which could bear the climate, without artificial heat; and he had abundance of these of all kinds, and in the greatest perfection. His garden was nevertheless well fenced; for it had high and close hedges, where holly formed a verdant and impenetrable wall, and where sweet brier and woodbine spread their delicious odours all around. His esculent herbs, such as cabbages and the like, which, though of most use, are the least ornamental, he disposed in such a manner as not to be seen unless purposely visited: they were concealed in large and irregular plots, surrounded by flowering shrubs, and various kinds of fruit-trees, both standards and espaliers, among which the walks were formed; which were perpetually covered with a short and verdant grass, kept closely mowed and rolled, where not a weed was to be seen. A large wood

of forest trees sheltered it from the rigours of the north and eastern wind ; and from among these trees issued the river we have already spoken of, which murmured through the bottom of the garden, the banks of which Mr. Evans had every where adorned with violets, cowslips, primroses, and lilies of the valley, which thriving under the shade of some weeping willows, that he had also planted there, formed a delicious and elegant seat, not to be equalled by the most pompous and elaborate work of the most skilful architect. To this place he now came ; and though it was a season in the year the least favourable to rural pleasures, yet the fineness of the day conspiring with the tranquillity of his mind, and with the recent joy which the recovery of his fair lodger had created, he fell into a train of rapturous sensations, which at length broke forth into the following soliloquy :

“ How happy are these shades ! How beautiful is Nature ! ’Tis now the depth of winter ; yet the luxuriant verdure of yon laurustinus,

laurustinus, the rich crimson of the fruit of yon arbutus glowing through the deep green of its surrounding leaves, seems to take from summer the proud boast of vegetation, since it cannot produce any thing more beautiful. Hark ! the sweet note of yon robin redbreast—he sits upon that naked currant bush, and warbles his song from amidst its leafless branches. Do you remember, little rogue, how often you regaled upon its fruit ? Do you expect to find the like entertainment now ? Or rather, do you come, in the generosity of your little heart, to visit it in its distress, and, thankful for the delicious meals it has afforded you, to cheer it with your song, and comfort it for its departed verdure ? Yes ! sweet warbler, you follow the voice of Nature, and raise your tuneful song in gratitude to him that feeds you. Shall man then be silent ? Shall he to whom most is given be the last to acknowledge ?—O ! thou sovereign and almighty Goodness, whose care is over all thy works : Thou who kin-

dlest the sun, and directest the planets in their orbs ; who findest food for the young ravens, and protectest the embryo of a worm : Thou who art above all things, and before all things, and who nevertheless carest and providest for the meanest of thy creatures : Oh ! grant me a heart to feel and to adore thy goodness, who hast made me what I am, and so much happier than I deserve to be !—Oh ! give me gratitude to acknowledge thy spontaneous mercy, and let it producè in me a like feeling to my fellow creatures, that, humbly imitating thy great example, I may impart to them some of that good which thou hast so liberally bestowed on me !”

Such was the train of thinking which the sight of a robin redbreast on a currant bush excited in the mind of the humble and the virtuous Evans : and where a mind is formed like his to virtue, and trained up in the exercise of piety and devotion, there is scarce an object in nature that is not productive of improvement, no sensation of
pleasure

pleasure that does not at the same time abound with virtue. O happy and enviable feeling! O exalted and sublime sentiment! This is true religion, equally removed from enthusiasm and superstition—this is that small still voice which follows us into our inmost retirement, which speaks in secret to our soul—the gentle key by which the affections of all virtuous hearts are tuned, and which affords them on earth no mean resemblance of the eternal harmony of heaven.

In this train of soothing and sacred meditation did Mr. Evans remain until Ned returned from his ride. As soon as he had put his horse in the stable, and set a good lock of hay before him, which he never neglected, he went into the garden to his father, in order to assist him with any work in which he might happen to be engaged—a pious duty, which was always agreeable to Ned, who loved him at once with all the affection of a child, and all the manly warmth of a friend. He revered him for his virtues, loved him for the sweetness

of his temper, admired him even in his weakneſſes, and felt for him every thing that the moſt dutiful affection or the moſt impaſſioned friendship could ſuggeſt. Evans again felt all theſe ſentiments for Ned, with four-fold force ; ſo that perhaps in the whole circuit of nature there was not another father and another ſon ſo linked together by every tie of reciprocal duty and affection. The ſight of Ned ſoon roused Mr. Evans from his meditations, and they both went ſeriously to work for ſome hours, in correcting all that had gone amiſs ſince they had laſt wrought together, and in doing ſuch other buſineſs as the ſeaſon of the year allowed. Let not my readers think this detail uninterreſting, or ſmile with contempt on the humble labours of Evans and his ſon. If they can inſpire one breaſt with a taſte for thoſe pure pleaſures, if they can induce one pair of idle hands to occupy themſelves in the ſame innocent and delightful employment, theſe pages have not been written in vain.

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The hour of dinner gave respite to their labour, and their labour gave them appetite ; a sauce more luxurious than is to be found in the whole system of cookery, and which indeed it is not in the power of any thing but labour to bestow. Their meal to-day was particularly enlivened by the presence both of Mrs. Evans and Miss Watkin, who indulged their native gaiety and good humour without restraint, since the happy change in their fair patient's complaint ; and Lady Cecilia herself had sat up the greatest part of the day, and had so far indulged their curiosity as to tell them her name was Cecilia Rivers, and that she was the only daughter of a gentleman of distinction in Ireland : but she did not tell them that her father was an earl, thinking the splendour of a title would embarrass them ; and besides, while she remained in Wales, she wished to be entirely at ease, without being known or visited only by the good family she was in, and their particular friends. Every thing indeed conspired to
make

make retirement at this time as pleasing to her as it was necessary; and she only waited the return of a little strength, to pursue her journey to Ireland, where her heart and her affections were now wholly centred. This was the first time that she had ever been out of it; and it had so happened that she had hardly ever passed a truly pleasant day since she left it. The dreadful event which deprived her of her dearest female friend completely disgusted her with travelling, and she longed with impatience for the time that was to restore her to her country, her friends, and the endearing embraces of her father. Her impatience, however, did not get the better of her wisdom; she knew she was in no condition to travel, and she determined to wait the restoration of her health, before she would attempt it: for the rest, she was perfectly satisfied with her present situation; she was pleased with the attention of Mrs. Evans and Miss Watkin, and was fully sensible that, since the fatal accident did happen, she could no where
have

have been placed more to her satisfaction. Mrs. Evans and Miss Watkin, on the other hand, thought and spoke of her as if she was more than human. Her elegance, her youth, her beauty, her distresses, and above all her piety and resignation, had raised in them sentiments of the highest admiration; and as no object is more interesting than beauty in distress, especially where that beauty is heightened by virtue, it is no wonder if the amiable Mrs. Evans grew enamoured with Lady Cecilia, and if, next to her husband and Ned, she loved her better than any thing else in the world. This really was very soon the case; and if Lady Cecilia's affections had not been so deeply and so recently wounded, by the loss of Mrs. Melville (a loss which she will never cease to deplore but with her life), it is highly probable she would have felt an equal attachment to Mrs. Evans. As it was, she felt all that gratitude could inspire; which is every thing in a heart susceptible like hers, formed both by nature and education to be the dwelling

dwelling of every noble and exalted virtue. Being thus, therefore, equally satisfied with each other, Mrs. Evans did every thing in her power to contribute to the ease and amusement of Lady Cecilia; and her ladyship, supported by religion, submitted to a calamity which could not be cured, and, daily recovering health and strength, with them recovered her usual cheerfulness and serenity of mind.

C H A P. X.

IN the neighbouring village, not far from Mr. Evans's house, there dwelt a poor man whose name was John Price : in his youthful days he had addicted himself to poetry and music, talents not uncommon in Wales; but finding, like other poets, that the Muses seldom could maintain their votaries, he listened to the noble trumpet of ambition, and enlisted in a marching regiment, in the twentieth year of his age. He served his country with courage and fidelity for several years, though he found Mars a severer master, and almost as bad a patron as Apollo. At last having received a wound in the head at the unfortunate battle of Fontenoy, which ended in a defluxion, by which he lost his sight; he was discharged the service, and returned to his native soil, to subsist on a small pension which the bounty of his country allowed him.

Here

Here he returned to his first mistresses the Muses, and composed ballads on his achievements and misfortunes, which he set to the ancient music of his country, and sung, accompanied with the harp, on which he played with tolerable skill. The charms of his music and of his pension got him a wife, and they between them got a daughter, who was now grown a rosy, buxom girl, with hazel eyes, and auburn hair, whose curling tresses used to ensnare the hearts of all the young fellows who came to listen to her father's music, and enjoy a pot of ale; for the good housewifery of the wife brewed excellent ale, which, accompanied with their music, they retailed in the village, and, to say the truth, it was an entertainment not altogether inelegant. Even Ned himself was charmed; and though he never descended to sit with the company that usually resorted there, yet he loved the old man, and used to go at times, when he knew the country people were otherwise engaged, to hear his tales and his songs, and to play himself

himself upon the harp—on which he soon made such proficiency as to touch it with far more delicacy and taste than Price himself.

One evening when Lady Cecilia had recovered so far as to partake of the family meals below stairs, after the tea things had been taken away, and the company were chatting about the fire, Miss Watkin asked her ladyship, if she was fond of music? “I love it passionately,” replied Lady Cecilia, “and think music well performed the most rapturous entertainment upon earth.” “It is indeed,” said Mr. Evans, “the most affecting of all entertainments; but it is only rapturous when employed in its first and noblest destination, the praises of the great Creator.” “Your observation is just,” replied Lady Cecilia, “and I will not contend for the propriety of my expression; though I confess I have felt such pleasure at some concerts, as I have no idea of being transcended by any thing on this side of heaven:—but, to be sure, music, when employed

ployed in religious worship, receives a grand addition of sublimity, nor can the feeble praises of man be offered up in any way more suitable to the inconceivable dignity of the great Being to whom they are addressed." "I fully agree with you in this sentiment," said Mr. Evans; "and I cannot but regret that custom has banished from our churches all instruments except the organ; which, though I allow it to be the grandest of all instruments, and the best suited to religious worship, is yet not the only one that might be so employed; and is besides of such cumbrous and expensive structure, as cannot be attained by any churches except cathedrals, or such as have very large revenues annexed to them." "It is a pity, indeed," said Lady Cecilia, "that organs large enough for a church are so very expensive; but I know of no instrument that could supply its place. The harpsichord is too feeble; and though I greatly admire a violin in a room, yet I could not endure to see a fiddler's elbow shaking

shaking in an anthem, or a trumpeter puffing out his cheeks in the solemn praises of the Deity." Evans smiled—"I confess," said he, "these objects would be rather ludicrous; but what think you of the harp? This is a solemn instrument, and not liable to those objections." "It is an instrument I am not very well acquainted with," said Lady Cecilia: "I have sometimes heard it played upon in Ireland," said she, "commonly by some blind woman; but either from its own defects, or the want of skill in the performer, I did not think it much preferable to a dulcimer." "You have never heard the Welch harp, then?" said Mr. Evans. She replied that she had not.—"Would you like to hear it?" said he. "Extremely," said Lady Cecilia—"have you one in the house?" "No, madam," said Mr. Evans, "but there is a poor old fellow in the neighbourhood, who was a soldier, and who lost his sight in the service of his country, but who, having some knowledge of playing on the harp, now follows it as
a pro-

a profession ; and if you have a mind to hear it, I will send for him, and order him to bring his harp with him." Lady Cecilia said, " By all means ; it would give me a great deal of pleasure." So the maid was immediately dispatched for honest John.

The poor fellow was however unable to come ; he had got a fall two days before, by trusting too much to his knowledge of the way, and walking without his dog, who commonly was a faithful guide ; and he was now lying in bed, unable to get out of it, from the bruise he had received.—These tidings were a great disappointment to the whole company, and Lady Cecilia could not conceal that she was affected both by the loss of the entertainment, and much more by the accident which occasioned it. Ned perceived her emotion—" I am sorry," said he, " for poor John's mischance ; he is an honest and a good-natured old man ; and deserved a happier lot in life than has fallen to his share : however, that Miss Cecilia (as he called her) may not be wholly disappointed,

pointed, I will go and fetch the harp myself, and endeavour to strum upon it a little for her entertainment." Lady Cecilia now recovered her spirits, and said, he was always doing obliging things; but begged, if it was far to fetch, or troublesome to carry, that he would not undertake it, as she could wait with patience till another time. Ned said it was neither far to fetch nor troublesome to carry, at least he should think nothing troublesome that could contribute to her entertainment; and he immediately went for it.

When he left the room, Lady Cecilia observed to Mrs. Evans, that her son had the most natural politeness of any young man she ever saw. "My obligations to him are great," said she; "great indeed, never to be forgotten!—(here a tear trembled in her eye)—yet he is always contriving to add to them by those little attentions which are the test of good manners, and which receive additional grace by the way in which he performs them." Mrs. Evans replied,
 " You

“ You are very good, madam, to think so favourably of my son : he is indeed an excellent lad, with a kind and a tender heart ; but you over-rate the services he has done to you, which are only those of duty, and which I know he thinks the happiest incident of his life.”

Miss Watkin bore her testimony to the amiableness of Ned's manners and disposition ; and assured Lady Cecilia, she would have no loss of the harper, for that Mr. Edward played upon that instrument with far greater delicacy of taste and power of execution.

Ned soon after returned with the harp upon his back ; which when Lady Cecilia saw, she was confounded indeed at giving him so much trouble ; for she had no idea of its size from the harps she had seen in Ireland. This was one of the best of its kind, and so tall, that when Ned had reared it, and placed it in its proper position, the top of it almost touched the ceiling of the room. The Welch harps, besides the great
difference

difference in their size, are all strung with cat-gut, which gives them a vast advantage over those of Ireland, which are not only diminutive in comparison, but have fewer strings, and those of wire, which never have the softness nor expression of the cat-gut strings. Ned now called forth all its harmony—his fingers flew over the chords with rapid velocity, yet touched them with such lightness that the sound at first seemed like the breath of some solemn and melodious voices wafted by the air from a remote distance; then, swelling by degrees, appeared to approach nearer, till, rising to its highest pitch, it warbled for some minutes, like the sweet notes of the sky-lark, singing at the gates of heaven; then all at once descended in a full stream of the richest melody, that overpowered the soul, and drowned the senses in a rapturous elysium.

Lady Cecilia listened to it with astonishment—her breath seemed to keep pace with the notes through all their variations; and when he came to the close, she was almost

exhausted, and, like Strada's nightingale, had well nigh expired on the strings.

She was infinitely delighted with the entertainment, and confessed she had never heard any stringed instrument like it, and for sweetness of expression she thought it superior even to the organ itself. Evans said he was happy that she was pleased, and that she gave her sanction to his judgment.

“ This,” said he, “ madam, is our national music, and perhaps I am partial to it on that account : I love it for another reason, and even hold it as something sacred ; for this is the instrument in which we are told that holy David delighted, and for whose music he composed those sacred and divine hymns whose beauty and sublimity excel all the poems in the world.” He then made Ned play several anthems, and accompanied them with his voice ; in which he himself joined with considerable grace and propriety.

When all was finished, he asked Lady
Cecilia,

Cecilia, if she did not think that instrument might be admitted into a church? "Yes, Mr. Evans," said she, "I think it might be admitted into heaven; and if any thing on earth can without profaneness be compared to heaven, it is such an entertainment as you have this night given me.—A family linked in the closest bonds of unity and affection, dealing benevolence on all around them, and hymning the praises of their Creator to the most melodious of all instruments—I can conceive nothing on earth to exceed this, and it has made an impression on my heart that I think I shall be the better for all the days of my life."

She then expressed a desire to try if she could make out a tune upon it. She was a perfect mistress of the harpsichord and the guitar; but never having touched a harp before, she could not be expected to do much on it at first. Ned Evans, however, shewed her the manner of touching the strings, and, leaning over her chair, assisted her in holding the harp. She very quickly accomplished

several tunes, and accompanied one or two of them with her voice. Miss Watkin whispered to Mrs. Evans, that Miss Cecilia put her in mind of a beautiful print she had once seen, where her celebrated namesake, St. Cecilia, the patroness of music, was represented playing on a harp; and that Mr. Edward looked like the angel that had come down from heaven to listen to her. This observation was made in the purity and innocence of her heart; but the elegance and aptness of the allusion surprised Mrs. Evans, knowing that Miss Watkin, though perfectly amiable in her disposition, was, from her confined education, rather vulgar in her conceptions.

From that moment however she suspected that Ned had made an impression on her heart; and as it would certainly be an advantageous alliance for him, she was not at all displeased at it. Morgan was now called, to carry the harp back to its owner; and as he went out of the room, Lady Cecilia followed, and, slipping a guinea into
his

his hand, desired him to give it to the poor man, and to bid him bring his harp again as soon as he was able to come with it: and she charged him not to say a word to any body else about the money. He promised faithfully to obey her: nevertheless, in two hours, it was known to the whole house: Though this action could not raise Lady Cecilia in the esteem of the Evans's, where she already held the highest place, yet it served to confirm them in a just opinion of the goodness of her heart, and also in that of her being a lady of distinction.

C H A P. XI.

MISS Watkin's attendance not being now necessary, she returned home to her father, who indeed could not do very conveniently without her, and who (considering his temper) had submitted with wonderful patience and good humour to want her so long. She left Lady Cecilia with infinite regret; and though it was but a small distance from Mr. Evans's to her father's, yet she shed as many tears at parting as if they never were to meet again: but Lady Cecilia, who had a sincere regard for her, and thought herself much indebted to her for her attendance, made her promise to come as often as she could, while she should still be obliged to remain in the country. Air and exercise being recommended to her as essential to her recovery, she borrowed a little pony from Miss Watkin, which had been well broke for her riding;

riding; and Ned Evans had the supreme felicity of attending her, sometimes on foot, and sometimes on his father's horse, in all her little excursions. He fed and dressed the little pony himself, cleaned the silver bit, and took care that all about him should be completely neat, for the charming burthen he was to carry. He did not neglect his own dress, nor the appearance of the horse which he was to ride; being solicitous in every thing, to appear attentive to the amiable and elegant Cecilia.

Many were the delightful rides they took in that beautiful and romantic country, whose sweetest scenes were studiously selected by Ned to conduct his fair companion to; and their conversation may be supposed to be such as would naturally flow from two virtuous and well-informed minds solicitous to please each other, whose tastes and whose opinions were very nearly alike, although their rank and their education had been so widely different. And indeed so successful had Ned been in finding amusements for

Lady Cecilia, that time slipped imperceptibly away ; and near three weeks had now elapsed before her ladyship discovered that she was restored to the full possession of beauty, health, and strength. Her glass would never have made this discovery ; for though she looked in it every day, yet she did not know that she was handsome : but some accidental question about Ireland, one day after dinner, brought it fully to her mind ; and her father, her friends, and her country, rushing at once upon her recollection, took full possession of her soul, and absorbed all other desires. She that very evening set about preparing for her journey, and her first care was to send a card to Dr. Jones, requesting his company the next day, and desiring him to bring his bill along with him.

The greatest part of the evening she spent in her own apartment, adjusting her own trunks, and that of her dear departed friend Mrs. Melville. The sight of her clothes, and the ornaments she used to wear, and
other

other little circumstances that could not fail to occur, brought the memory of that excellent woman fresh to her mind; she spent hours in the tender and affecting contemplation of the various articles that had once been hers: and when Mrs. Evans came up to summon her to supper, she was under the necessity of entreating to be excused, and to be allowed to dedicate that night to tears, and to the beloved memory of her unfortunate friend.

At length the sources of her sorrow dried; she retired to rest, when a sweet slumber refreshed her wearied spirits, till the morning rose with healing on its wings; and she repaired to breakfast, in all the power of renovated health and beauty. Never did she appear so lovely in the eyes of the Evans's, as at this instant. Whether it was that her returned health, and the complacency of her mind in the agreeable hope of speedily being restored to her friends, did really kindle in her countenance a more than ordinary glow of beauty; or whether, rather, the knowledge

how soon they were to lose her, did not awaken in the hearts of the Evans's a more lively and impassioned tenderness : certain it is they were all of them more affected with her appearance this morning than ever they had been before ; and Ned, in particular, could hardly take his eyes off her, except to conceal a rising moisture, which in spite of all his efforts would sometimes become visible. He was pleased however to hear her propose taking a last ride with him, the day being remarkably fine ; and he hastened with his usual alacrity to saddle his own horse and her little pony : neither had he been forgetful of himself on this occasion ; for, thinking it might be the last time he should have the happiness to accompany her, and intending to propose a ride, if Lady Cecilia had not herself prevented him, he had taken more than ordinary care that morning of his dress, solicitous (perhaps without knowing it) to appear particularly amiable to her. He had on a pea-green

green frock, quite new, with silver buttons, a casimir waistcoat with a fancied pattern of silk embroidery round the button-holes, new doe-skin breeches, and boots ; his hat, which was also new, was adorned with a silver loop and band ; his hair, which was always beautiful, was this day uncommonly glossy, and disposed in luxuriant curls round his neck ; and his whole figure, animated with health, vigour, and activity, was certainly well calculated to make an impression on a female heart.

Lady Cecilia complimented him on the elegance of his dress, which she had not seen before ; and he assured her he had made it up wholly with the view of being a more suitable attendant upon her in the excursions which he had the happiness to take with her. Lady Cecilia wore the same elegant travelling habit, in which she had first made her appearance on the unfortunate night of her arrival ; and, thus equipped, they rode out together.

They visited in their tour all the places

to which they had been accustomed to go in their former jaunts, her ladyship having a desire to see them for the last time ; when turning her horse to go home, Ned told her he had one sequestered scene yet to shew her, which he had purposely reserved for the last, because he himself thought it the most beautiful, and that, as he was in the custom of often visiting it, he wished it to be endeared to him by her presence and approbation. Lady Cecilia made no objection, and they proceeded, by a narrow road with high hedges, till they came to a valley between two mountains. This valley was not above one hundred yards wide ; and the mountains, which rose to a prodigious height on each side, seemed to correspond so in their windings and appearance, as to make it probable that they once were united, but torn asunder by some very remote and violent convulsion of nature. Their sides were clothed almost to the top with thick forests, among which there were so many hollies and other evergreens as gave them a rich verdure

dure even in the depth of winter : here and there a naked rock, loftier than the tallest steeple, stood like a giant baring his breast to the tempest, and bidding defiance both to time and weather. Through the midst of the vale a clear stream ran murmuring over a bed of white pebbles, and brawled among the fragments of rocks, which the revolution of ages had separated from the lofty summits of the surrounding mountains. The banks on either side were covered with a short thick moss, and a profusion of mountain flowers and alpine plants, which were at once grateful to the eye and easy to the tread. Through this vale they rode by a gently-winding path, till they were stopped by a stupendous cavern, out of which the brook issued, and which was hollowed by nature in an enormous rock, that stretched quite across the valley and united the mountains on either side. Lady Cecilia was prodigiously struck with the beauty and grandeur of the scene, and stood for a long time contemplating the awful entrance of
the

the cavern with a mixture of terror and delight. Ned asked her to go into it ; but she seemed more than half afraid, intimidated by its frowning horror, and the darkness in which it seemed involved : but Ned assured her there was no kind of danger, and if she could get the better of her apprehension, she would find her curiosity fully gratified.

Encouraged by his persuasion, and relying on his protection, she consented to go in ; so, alighting from their horses, Ned fastened them to the stump of an old tree, and led the lovely Cecilia to the mouth of the cavern. The entrance was overgrown with ivy and various kinds of shrubs and bushes, which enriched the nakedness of the rocks, and contracted the mouth of the opening : within, it rose to a vast height, like the aisle of a Gothic cathedral, and was adorned with an infinite variety of beautiful petrifications, which hung like icicles from the roof, and round all the sides assumed a thousand curious and fantastic forms, in
which

which a lively imagination could discover a never-ending variety of resemblances to natural objects.

They walked through this wonderful cavern near a hundred yards, when they came to a large hole in the side of the rock, out of which came pouring the stream purer than crystal itself, which watered the valley, and which flowed with an unceasing and unvarying spring.

The terror with which Lady Cecilia entered the cave was now dissipated, for she found it infinitely lighter within than it appeared to be without; and taking advantage of a mossy bank which was near, she sat down to contemplate at leisure the wonderful beauties that surrounded her.

Ned sat down beside her, and, removing a little stone which was at his back, he produced some oranges and dried fruits, which he had before provided for such an occasion as this, and agreeably surprised Lady Cecilia with this elegant refreshment. Out of a deep scollop shell, which he had also brought
on

on purpose, he presented her some water, scooped up from the pure and transparent element that issued from the rock; which when she had drunk, and expressed her satisfaction in its delicious and refreshing coolness—"See," said he, "how easily nature is satisfied! and how bountifully and even luxuriously she provides for all who have purity of taste sufficient to relish her simple blessings!"

"Truly, Mr. Evans," said Lady Cecilia, "I see it and acknowledge it. This cavern, of Nature's making, surpasses in magnificence the most splendid apartment that wealth and grandeur ever erected; nor can the most laboured cookery produce any flavour so grateful as your fruits, or the most costly wines be so refreshing to a thirsty palate as the living stream which pours from this rock."

"'Twas thus," said Evans, "that mankind was intended to fare, by his great Creator, in the days of primeval innocence; when Eve spread her fruits in the bower,
and

and Adam and the angel shared them with her. "Yet," said he, "were this rock and this wilderness mine, and did the lovely Cecilia consent to share them with me, I should not envy Eve her fruits, nor Adam his paradise, though honoured with the company of angels."

The astonished Cecilia made no reply; a deep blush suffused her radiant countenance, and a universal tremor agitated her whole frame. She cast a look at Ned, in which he thought he saw severity mingled with sweetness; and rising to quit the cave, he hastened to atone for his presumption, and threw himself at her feet. "Oh! stay," he said; "divine Cecilia, stay! and do not quit me in displeasure. Oh! pardon an unguarded word, which, though the genuine sentiment of my heart, shall yet never more offend you." "I beg of you to let me go, Mr. Evans," she replied; "let me go into the air: I did not expect such a speech from you, and far less that you should betray me into this horrid cavern to make me hear it."

"Oh!

“ Oh! best of women,” said Evans, “ say not I have betrayed you. I never did, nor ever will betray you; I have indeed betrayed myself; betrayed a secret which I ought not to have revealed; which I should have locked up in my heart, till that wretched heart was broke with keeping it.”

“ Well, let me pass, Mr. Evans,” said she; “ I did not desire to hear your secret, and wish to God I never had; let me pass, I desire you; I will hear nothing while you detain me in this odious cavern.”

Ned now rising with the most respectful diffidence, led her out of the cave; and then requeking her to sit down for a little, she consented. “ Oh! Miss Cecilia,” said he; I entreat you pardon me; on my knees I implore your forgiveness. Pity a heart that cannot live under your displeasure, and which never harboured a thought of you inconsistent with the purest honour and the profoundest reverence. If my unhappy passion has betrayed me into presumption, impute it I beseech you to my youth.

youth and inexperience, to my country manners and confined education. That I love you with all the powers of my soul, I have ventured to declare, and never will deny ; but this is my misfortune, and not my fault. It is impossible to behold you and not to love you, and surely it can never be criminal to admire excellence wherever it is found. To have dared to hint to you my passion, though in the most distant manner, was, I own, presumption ; and for this presumption I entreat your pardon.”—“Mr. Evans,” replied her ladyship, “you have my pardon ; but when I had accompanied you alone in riding round this country, when I came with you to this solitary valley, and even ventured against my inclination into this odious cavern, I thought myself entitled to your protection, and little expected you would insult me with a declaration of love.”—“Cruel, nay unjust Miss Rivers,” said Ned, re-assuming some dignity, “when did I insult you ? Know that it is not in my nature to insult the meanest woman.

woman upon earth, far less the idol of my soul's affection. If to love you with an ardour little short of adoration, with the tenderest and most disinterested passion, inspired indeed at first by your surprising beauty when I saw you in distress, and since confirmed by the surpassing excellence of your heart ; if to know no happiness but in your presence, to desire no blessing but your welfare, and to be ready to lay down my life for your sake ; if to express these sentiments in the humblest and most respectful terms, be to insult you, then have I mistaken the meaning of that word, and confess myself at a loss in what language to address you."—"I am sorry, Mr. Evans," replied Lady Cecilia, "that I should have made use of a word which, I confess, is too severe, but which you have taken up in a much stronger manner than I had any intention of giving cause for. I must therefore in my turn sue to you for pardon, for having used so unguarded an expression." "But, oh! lovely Cecilia," interrupted Evans,

Evans, “ sue not to me for pardon, nor for any thing else—you are formed to command me, and my greatest pride shall be to be able to obey. It is now I fear that I have indeed insulted you, and that I am debtor to your goodness for being forgiven. Oh ! pardon me, Miss Rivers, that I have presumed to lift my aspiring thoughts to your perfections. The happiness that I have enjoyed in your company has intoxicated me, and made me to forget myself. Your native dignity has awoke me, and brought me to my senses. Who you are I know not, nor what is your rank or situation in life ; I believe it, however, to be every thing that is noble and exalted. Pardon therefore, Miss Rivers, a presumption which your own condescension has given birth to. I know I am not worthy of you, and am astonished at my folly that could prompt your poor forlorn, destitute Evans, without family, without fortune, without friends, and even without hope, to dare to lift his eyes so far above him. Yet believe me,

me, Miss Cecilia, no unworthy motive, no sordid view of interest or wealth, has driven me to this madness: it was yourself, your charming self, that was alone the object of my contemplation. Ever since Heaven restored you to our prayers, and that I have had the honour to attend you in these excursions, which were recommended for the re-establishment of your health, I have been dancing on a sea of pleasure too tumultuous for my judgment, and have suffered my imagination to roam into a fanciful elysium, which I now know can never have a real existence; but I am now come home, Miss Cecilia, I will return to reason and myself. Forgive me then, Miss Rivers, this first, and this last transgression; restore me to that place in your esteem which my foolish presumption has too justly forfeited; and though I can never cease to adore you, yet trust me I shall never more insult you with the avowal of my flame, though it should burn in secret till it consumes me.”—“Why, Mr. Evans,” said Lady Cecilia, “do you again

use a word which never should have passed between us ? It is ungenerous thus to echo it upon me, when I have already apologized for it, and am sincerely sorry that it ever escaped me. I am abundantly sensible of your merits ; infinitely grateful for the protection which your father has afforded me, and for the generous and even heroic part which you yourself have acted towards me. You are therefore in full and secure possession of my esteem, and you may be assured that neither it, nor my gratitude, can ever cease but with my life. But when you talk of love, you talk a language to which it does not become me to listen ; and even suppose I could be so weak as to suffer my heart to be surprised, what would be the consequence but misery to us both ? I know my duty to my honoured and beloved father too well, ever to dispose of myself without his concurrence ; and I know that he would have insuperable objections to our union, though I make no doubt but he will have a just and grateful sense of the obligations
you

you have laid us under.”—“ Oh ! lovely Cecilia,” replied Evans, “ talk not of obligations, for you owe me none ; it is I that am infinitely your debtor, for I owe to you the knowledge of myself. It is enough that you forgive me, that your charming lips have pronounced my pardon, and that you have again reinstated me in your esteem. To-morrow separates us perhaps for ever. I shall never more see you, nor behold you, nor hear the heavenly music of your voice. Your poor forlorn friend will lose the only happiness he has on earth, and you will no more be troubled with his importunities, or his complaints. Grant me then but one request. Grant it me, Miss Rivers, as the seal of my pardon, and I shall never trouble you with any thing more. Say, divine Cecilia, will you grant it me ?” “ What am I to grant you, Mr. Evans ?” said Lady Cecilia ; “ and what request can you make, consistent with honour and prudence, that I can wish to refuse you ?” “ O grant me !” he replied, “ one lock of your lovely hair,

to wear next my bosom, and to remind me in all my troubles, that I have one angel friend to wish me well."—"I know not," said Lady Cecilia, "whether this request be consistent with prudence or not; but as the seal of your pardon I will give it you: and if you truly regard me as you say, remember, Mr. Evans, that she who gave it you is sincerely your friend; that your happiness and your honour are very near her heart; and let the sight of it remind you never to do any thing unworthy either of yourself or her." So saying, she drew a pair of scissors from her pocket-book, and presented them to Evans to take the lock where he chose. He received them with rapture, and severed one where it could not be missed, but which had played in a curling ringlet down her chaste and snowy bosom.

He returned her the scissors on his knees; and, pressing her lovely hand to his lips, "What language can I find," said he, "in which to thank you for this inestimable gift! I know not what those stupid bigots

feel who adore the filthy bones which the superstition of Rome has dignified with the name of relics : but I know, that as oft as I look upon this hair, I shall feel my soul expand with every virtue ; and I shall pray to him from whom alone come all good gifts, to make me worthy of the friendship of Miss Cecilia Rivers."

Thus all was cleared, and peace and confidence fully re-established between them. They now mounted their horses to go home, when Lady Cecilia took one lingering and parting look at the spot where they had been sitting—"Well, really, Mr. Edward," said she, "this is a most charming scene, and the cavern the finest union of the sublime and beautiful that I believe nature ever produced : it is a subject for the pencil of Salvator Rosa, and has made such an impression on my fancy that I think I could draw it myself."—"May it never be erased then from your memory," said Evans, "as I assure you it never will from mine ! and may my foolish presumption be buried in oblivion,

oblivion, that no circumstance may present itself to your remembrance to make the recollection of this scene unpleasing to you !”

They now rode towards home ; but Lady Cecilia proposed calling on Miss Watkin, to take leave, as it was the last time she would have an opportunity of seeing her ; and she prevailed on her to accompany them to Mr. Evans's, to spend the evening there. They found Doctor Jones already arrived, according to the invitation that was sent him. He was delighted to see Lady Cecilia so perfectly recovered, and was indeed astonished to behold the blaze of beauty that now surrounded her ; which he had no idea of from the transient views he had of her in her sickness, and which received inexpressible addition from her native grace, her unaffected good humour, and from her seeming to be wholly unconscious that she excelled in any thing.

The day was passed with the utmost pleasantness, except that on the part of the Evanses it was a little chastised by the re-

collection that it was the last in which they were to enjoy her company, in all probability for ever ; which was in truth to them become a serious misfortune, as her many amiable qualities had so endeared her to the old man and his good woman, that they loved her with the affection of parents, and, next to Ned, considered her as the dearest and the nearest friend they had.

Before Doctor Jones went away, she took occasion to ask him apart for his bill ; it amounted to between three and four pounds : she gave him a bank note of ten pounds, which with great difficulty she obliged him to accept ; and told him that she still considered herself as greatly his debtor, for his humanity and attention. This piece of generosity he disclosed to Mr. Evans before he left the house, which more and more confirmed his affection and esteem.

CHAP. XII.

THE morning now dawned serene, and the sun faintly gilding the summits of the mountains, shot his tremulous rays into the chamber where the lovely Cecilia was sleeping. A deep blush overspread her glowing cheek; and her dishevelled tresses, curling over her snowy neck, rose and fell respondent to the short and interrupted heavings which marked some inward agitation of her heart. Her heart indeed was the temple of innocence and un sullied purity, and, whether sleeping or waking, knew no thought, nor owned a sentiment, that could ruffle its repose; but fancy at that instant had presented to her sleeping senses a delusive dream, which caused her agitation. She imagined she had been out riding with young Evans, and that they had taken their course to the romantic valley which they had visited the day before. The rocks and the trees glowed

with an unusual verdure, and all the harmony of the vernal groves was tuned to entertain her. The cavern which had yesterday struck her with awe, was now divested of its terrors, and all its rocks were covered, as she thought, with myrtles and roses, and a variety of other charming flowers, which diffused delicious odours through the whole vault. While all her senses were thus delighted, she beheld the image of Ned: prostrate at her feet breathing the ardours of his passion, and pleading his cause with all the energy of native eloquence. She fancied that she heard him with complacency, and that she was even on the point of consenting to an union, when a dreadful tempest rose suddenly in the cavern: the roses and the myrtles died away—the unfortunate Edward vanished, no where to be found—and she was left alone in the cave, in stygian darkness, amidst the roar of waters, the bellowings of thunder, and the continual howl of raging and contending winds.

How charmed was she when she awoke
and

and found it all delusion ; when the soft beams of a mild and temperate sun, now wholly risen above the horizon, dispelled the horrid vision, and, like herself, beamed with beneficent ray on all around ! She rose with joy from her bed ; she blessed the new-born day ; and poured out on her knees the effusions of grateful adoration to that greatest and best of Beings, who in an instant can break down and make whole again, can draw us from the depth of misery, can illumine even the gloom of death—whose ear is never closed that it cannot hear, nor his hand shortened that it cannot save.

Eased now of her terrors, and her heart restored to its tranquillity, she equipped herself for her journey, and, fresh and fragrant as the moss rose which opens its dewy leaves to the sweet morning of the first of June, she repaired to breakfast to the parlour, where Mr. and Mrs. Evans were already dressed to receive her. A post-chaise had been ordered from Conway the night before for her, by Doctor Jones when he

returned there, and was newly arrived to carry her to Bangor Ferry ; and poor Ned, who had been long risen and dressed to attend his lovely friend for the last time, had gone out to see that all was right, and his own horse ready, that he might accompany her. If Lady Cecilia had had disturbed repose, this affectionate youth had none. In the silence of night, when his thoughts were no longer amused by conversation, or the sight of surrounding objects, they naturally turned inwards on himself, and he imagined the awful darkness of that hour no improper emblem of the gloom of his own situation. Now it was that he revolved in his soul all the transactions of the day ; the image of the lovely Cecilia was ever present to his imagination ; and her charming voice, enjoining him to love no more, still vibrated in his ear ; while the sacred lock, which for the first time had been his nightly companion, reclined upon his breast and instilled into it new fuel to increase his flame. Ah ! hapless youth ! you are yet a stranger to
 her

her exalted rank—to her princely fortune—to the elevated sentiments of her family, which, descended from a long line of illustrious ancestors, would shudder at the thoughts of so unequal an alliance. Even she herself, the most virtuous of women and the most dutiful of children, too noble to conceive a passion which should appear below her; too wise to yield to it if she did conceive it; even she herself is leagued against you, and forms the strongest barrier to oppose your wishes. Summon then, ingenuous youth, your firmest resolution. All worthy and all manly as thou art, exert thy noblest courage, subdue yourself—subdue this unhappy passion, whilst yet it can be subdued, and do not cloud the golden morning of your life with hopeless love.

Mr. and Mrs. Evans and Lady Cecilia had begun breakfast before Ned came in. When he entered, her ladyship rose, and wished him a good morning. His eyes thanked her with the warmest gratitude; but his heart was too full to put his looks

into language, and his tongue would have faltered in expressing it if he had. The truth is, that her ladyship herself was the only unembarrassed person in the company; and nothing but the pleasure she had in the hopes of so soon seeing her father and her friends, could have prevented her from being seized with the same soft infection. The moistened eyes which she beheld around her, were however pleasing testimonies of the sincere affection in which she was held; and the amiable manners of her kind hosts, joined to a just sense of her obligation to them, riveted them in her heart with the strongest attachment; she therefore hastened to cheer both them and herself, by giving a livelier turn to their thoughts—"My dear and ever beloved friends," said she, "my kind and generous protectors, I see by the suffusion in your countenances how much I am indebted to your affection; and if at this instant I appear less moved, trust me, it is not owing to any deficiency in the warmth of my gratitude, or in the truth and tenderness

ness of my inviolable attachment.—You love me, and it is my joy and my pride to see it. You think you are going to lose me, and that you will never see me more. If I thought so, you would not see me thus unmoved, nor do I know to what lengths I might carry my affliction. No, my beloved friends! be assured your Cecilia can never forget you—far less recollect you with indifference. How then should I apprehend that the narrow channel between Wales and Dublin should for ever separate me from your embraces, or that I should not have many opportunities of seeing my beloved friends, both in their country and my own? I am going to the arms of a beloved parent, who will refuse me nothing; I cannot conceal the pleasure of my soul in the prospect of soon beholding the paternal smile with which he ever meets his children; and I anticipate the rapture with which he will hear of my escape, and the gratitude with which his noble and generous heart will overflow, when I recount to him the tenderness

derness and affection I have experienced at your hands. Cease then, my honoured friends, to grieve for my departure ; for I foresee many happy days for us all, and many pleasing hours that I trust we shall yet spend together.”—“ Excellent Miss Rivers !” said Mr. Evans, “ I admire the grace and beauty of your sentiments more than of your person ; and I beseech the Almighty, who has promised length of days to those who honour their father and their mother, that he will be graciously pleased to make good that promise to you ; extending your days to the longest period of human existence, and making them as happy and as prosperous as long. For us, we shall rejoice in every good that can befall you ; we trust you will not deny us the pleasure to hear often from you ; and, whether we ever meet again, or this is the last time we are to have that happiness, we shall never cease to pray for your prosperity, and to think of you with the tenderest affection and most profound respect.”

Mrs.

Mrs. Evans joined in all these sentiments of her husband, and poor Ned looked a great deal more than he expressed. The carriage being at last ready, Mr. Evans conducted her to it, while Ned mounted his horse to see her safe over the ferry. As she was stepping into the chaise, she put five guineas into Mr. Evans's hand, requesting him to distribute it to such poor people in his neighbourhood as he knew stood most in need of it; and, waving her hand to Mrs. Evans in a last and tender adieu, she drove off.

Ned rode by the side of the chaise; and the day being fine, he pointed out to her the many beautiful objects with which that road abounds; and Lady Cecilia, wishing to cheer his spirits, which she soon discerned were ebb'd into his heart, endeavoured to give their conversation a lively turn, and talked of what she would do when she next visited Wales. In this manner did they pass the time till they came to Bangor Ferry, when a new chaise being to be got
at

at the other side, Ned went over in the boat with her to see her safe in it, and that she might have no trouble with her trunks or her postillions. The chaise was soon got, and the trying moment was just arrived when the faithful and affectionate Edward was to take his last adieu—when his heart was to be robbed of its beloved inhabitant, the desire of his eyes to be withdrawn from his view; never, perhaps never to behold her more!

He bore this trial, however, as became a man—as one who knew how to feel, but who would not be overwhelmed. He conducted his adored Cecilia to the carriage, and, taking her hand (which she did not withdraw), two tender tears dropped on it as he placed her in her seat. These he respectfully kissed off;—and as he stood leaning on the door, two others, which appeared in his eyes, fell on a white handkerchief which he then held in his hand. Her ladyship, who beheld his sincere and silent sorrow not without visible emotion, was obliged, for the first time, to put her handkerchief also to her eyes—
 “Come,”

"Come," said she, "generous Edward!" as she removed it, "I see the tenderness of your heart, and I respect it. Give me that handkerchief, and take you mine: they are embalmed with the tears of friendship, and ought not to be put to any vulgar use."

"O beloved Cecilia!" replied he, "how gracious is this gift! Yes, I will retain it as a sacred treasure—and when you see the two initials of my name, O remember your hapless Edward, and pray that I may be enabled to obey your last commands."

The horses now moved—the friends were separated. She waved her hand from the window, and the forlorn Edward remained fixed till the turning of the road withdrew the carriage from his view. When he could no longer see it, he still continued to listen to its lessening sound, till the dying rumbling of the wheels was heard no more. At length he awoke from his trance. He repassed the ferry alone; and, mounting his horse at Jackson's, returned with slow and sorrowing steps to his father's.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIII.

IT was almost dark by the time he got home. His first care was to put up his horse in the stable, and to set before him a good feed of oats and a rack full of the best hay : for, though poor Ned himself had not tasted a morsel since the morning, nor did even feel the least appetite, yet he very humanely considered that honest Black-bird, strong as the friendship was between them, might not perhaps sympathize with him in all his feelings. He did not, however, on that account, follow the example of too many, who, when unhappy themselves, wish to make every one connected with them unhappy also ; but he followed the natural bent of his inclination, which was to impart pleasure to the utmost of his power to every being around him, rational or irrational ; and he justly thought, that if the divine Being had condescended to order
that

that the ox which treadeth out the corn should not be muzzled, but should have his share of the corn for his wages, so it became him to provide a comfortable meal and lodging for the faithful beast who had carried him without stumbling for twenty miles. And indeed it were to be wished that those who call themselves good-natured people, would endeavour to manifest that amiable quality in all their actions; for I have often seen instances where those who were esteemed the best-natured people in the world by their superiors, were held in a very different light by their domestics—and he who was the delight of a whole company at a tavern, go home to be the terror of his wife and children. True good nature is the most exalted virtue of the soul. This is that virtue which St. Paul calls charity, and which, to be genuine, must be as extensive as creation. It must not confine its feelings to its friends and benefactors, nor even to its species. It must desire the happiness of universal nature; as far as is in its

its power it must promote it; and it must not behold without commiseration the sufferings of the meanest worm. With this virtue was our Ned possessed, as much as ever it was possessed by any human being; and now having seen all things right in the stable, he went into the house to his father.

The good old man he found cheering himself with a pipe and a mug of ale, while Mrs. Evans was preparing to make tea for herself and Miss Watkin, who had come to spend the evening with her, and to console her friends for the absence of their late guest. And in truth this act of friendship was not unnecessary; for if one usually finds a want after parting with a common acquaintance, after having been any time together, much more did Evans and his wife regret the loss of Lady Cecilia, whom they truly loved as if she was their own daughter. The whole of the conversation turned upon her many virtues and engaging qualities, and the women would sometimes give scope to fanciful hopes of profit and
 advantage

advantage that might arise from her acquaintance. But these Mr. Evans checked, declaring that he desired no profits or advantages further than the consciousness of having done his duty, and the pleasure it gave him to think he had been of any use to her ; but as for any change in his worldly situation, he did not know that it could be changed for the better, at least not for any in which he could be more contented. " Well—but, my dear," said Mrs. Evans, " who knows but Miss's father may be some great man, as indeed I am convinced from her appearance that he is?—and who knows but he may get you a living, or perhaps make you an Irish bishop?" Evans looked at her with an eye of pity, not wholly free from contempt. " My dear," said he, " I would advise you not to feed your fancy with such romantic and absurd expectations, which will never produce any thing but disappointment. My head does not ach for a mitre, which I am convinced would neither become it so well, nor fit
 so

so easy upon it, as the worsted night-cap you were so good as to knit for me last week. Miss Rivers's father may, for aught I know, be a great man : but you know nothing of the great, if you think they are disposed to give magnificent rewards for small obligations ; they rate the value of their favours at full as much as they are worth, and indeed seldom bestow any thing for nothing except promises."

Ned sat for the most part silent, wholly wrapped up in the contemplation of Cecilia herself, and altogether indifferent to the titles and mitres either of her father or his own. He longed for the hour of rest, which was to free him from the embarrassment of company ; when he might indulge his thoughts without witnesses or interruption—could clasp the sacred ringlet to his bosom, and feed upon that fatal flame which delighted while it consumed him.

Several days now passed over without any remarkable occurrence happening, except
that

that both Mr. and Mrs. Evans were alarmed at the visible change in Ned's disposition. He was no longer the gay, the easy, cheerful lad, with joy laughing in his eyes, and health beaming on his cheek. He no longer rose with the sun to help his father in the garden, or follow the hounds with his favourite companions. He sometimes rode out indeed, but it was always alone; and once or twice he was absent from morning till night without any person's knowing where he had been. In company he appeared dull and inattentive, and at all times seemed immersed in some profound contemplation. As his colour began visibly to fade, and his flesh to waste, both Mr. and Mrs. Evans were greatly alarmed, and not without reason, apprehending that he was going fast into a decline. This, however, seemed so opposite to his constitution, that they could hardly imagine it; and the pious Evans began to fear that he might have some secret complaint which he was afraid to own, but which required the aid

of physic. He determined therefore to watch him close, and, if he found any confirmation of this suspicion, to apply immediately to Doctor Jones. He thought unworthily, however, of his boy, and had the great satisfaction to be soon convinced that he did so ; for, going one morning into Ned's room when he was out riding, he there found his escritoir open, which he had forgot to lock ; and as several papers were lying on it, he could not resist a father's curiosity (which perhaps in his case was fully justifiable) to examine them.

Here were found several little landscapes of places in the neighbourhood, some of them only sketched, and some nearly finished, in all of which were introduced two figures either riding or sitting, which Mr. Evans imagined bore some resemblance to the forms of Lady Cecilia and his son. There were some attempts to take a likeness of her features ; but these were very imperfect, though sufficiently like to indicate for whom they were designed. In one corner
lay

lay the sacred ringlet, carefully deposited in a small wafer box, and on a loose bit of paper were written the following unfinished lines :

Why sinks my soul beneath this leaden gloom ?

What woe is this that steals my youth away ?

Why wish I for thy cold embrace, my tomb,

Ere twenty suns have seen my natal day ?

No youth whose gentle heart with mine was twin'd

In friendship's holy bond, hath prov'd untrue ;

Nor to the grave has cruel death consign'd

One kindred name whose loss I need to rue.

No foul dishonour stains my youthful fame,

No secret guilt appalls my conscious soul ;

I never ting'd my parents' cheeks with shame,

Nor wish'd to wander from their just controul.

Why sink I then beneath this leaden gloom ?

What woe is this that steals my youth away ?

O love ! O cruel love ! you write my doom,

You sign my death—and I, content, obey.

But if the angel maid for whom I die,

Who heard my vows, and yet——

When

When Mr. Evans had read these lines, he was no longer at a loss to know the true cause of Ned's distemper; and great was his satisfaction to find his suspicions had been unjust, and that there was not the least reason to be apprehensive of his going into a decline. His being in love gave him no manner of uneasiness, as he thought it nothing but what was natural to his age and constitution, especially as the object of his affections was so supremely amiable. He saw indeed the folly of his passion, and the great improbability of its ever being gratified; but he could not condemn it: he therefore determined to treat it with jocularity, and to find out some employment for Ned that should wean him from it by degrees. As for the escritoir, he left it just as he found it, and hastened to impart his discovery to his wife. That good woman was rejoiced to find it was nothing but love, which she considered in the same light as a fit of the gripes, and almost as easy to be cured:—but it must be remembered that she

she was fifty-six years of age, and that it is much to be doubted whether she ever was possessed of the tender and exquisite sensibility of the gentle and refined Edward.

A little before dinner he came home, and, going into his room, was astonished to see his escritoir open. When he saw, however, the key in it, and all his papers just as he had left them, he was satisfied that nobody had seen them ; and, hastily locking them up, he made a secret vow never to be so careless again.

At dinner he could hardly eat any thing, though he had taken a long ride, and though Mrs. Evans had provided something that she knew he liked. However, she did not urge him ; but when the cloth was removed, Mr. Evans proposed drinking one of the bottles of wine, which had been left by Lady Cecilia, to her health, and to the hopes of speedily hearing some good account of her. Ned's eyes brightened a little at this proposal ; and the wine being brought, he turned over a full bumper to the toast,

seemingly with great satisfaction. “ Hah, hah ! young man,” said Mr. Evans, “ I see what sauce it is that whets your appetite.— Had it been the custom to eat healths, as well as drink them, I fancy the hare we had to-day would not have gone away so whole.” Ned was going to say something in reply, when the old man interrupted him.— “ Come, come,” said he, “ I hate these leaden glooms ; ’tis time enough for an old fellow like me to be longing for the tomb. Youth is the season of joy, and we should never give up any of it to sorrow, for which we shall find abundant leisure afterwards. So come, my boy, drink another bumper to ‘ May we have in our arms whom we love in our hearts !’ ”

Poor Ned’s face was now one universal glow of crimson—he plainly saw his secret was discovered, and that his father had seen the verses, and the hair, and all the rest of it. He pledged the toast, however, which he drank with no less satisfaction than the first. And Mr. Evans continuing his vein of humour,

humour, he at length brought Ned almost into the same tune, and they finished their bottle very cordially between them. His spirits being somewhat raised by the wine, and his heart warmed by the engaging openness with which his father treated him, he disclosed to him his whole soul—related all the progress of his love, the adventure of the cave, the attainment of the lock of hair, the exchange of the handkerchiefs, and all the hopes and fears which were preying alternately on his mind.

Happy son! who, when the sorrows of your heart required the comfort of a friend whose wisdom could advise, and whose gentleness could soothe—found that friend in a father!

Happy father! who uniting the candour and openness of youth to the wisdom and experience of age, who seeking a friend to form to virtue, and to be the honour and the comfort of your declining years, found that friend in a son!

C H A P. XIV.

NED having thus unboomed himself to his father, found an infinite load of anxiety moved from his breast, and a secret spring of comfort began to rise in his soul, that seemed to promise the return of peace, though he knew not from what quarter she was to come. Sleep too, who like a false friend had forsaken him the moment he was in adversity, was pleased this night to revisit him, and sealed his eyelids in such profound repose as steeped all his senses in forgetfulness. Not so the worthy curate, who, notwithstanding the pleasantry with which he treated Ned's passion to himself, was yet sincerely alarmed for its consequences. He knew the irresistible fury with which love blazes in some bosoms, and he more than suspected that Ned's was stored
with

with whatever is usually supposed to add fuel to that flame.

When therefore he considered the innumerable beauties both of mind and body which centred in Lady Cecilia, he did not wonder at his son's attachment, nor doubt but that it would be lasting; but when he reflected on his humble fortune, and the probable situation of the lady, he trembled for the unhappy youth, and saw nothing before him but sorrow and disappointment. He determined therefore, the very next morning, to set his danger full in his view; and as he wisely considered that idleness was the food of love, so he determined, without longer delay, to engage Ned in some active business, that should fully engross both his time and his attention. But here was the difficulty—what that business was to be, was the great question, and really it was a question that could not easily be determined—Not that it was at all difficult to find out what Ned was fit for; for there was nothing so great but

what he had both capacity and industry to attain—but, alas ! the means were wanting, —for who can attain any thing now a-days without money ? and where could our poor curate procure it, with a family, and an income of only forty pounds a year ! And yet, out of this pittance, he had had the prudence always to have a whole year's income lying by him, in case of any sudden emergency, and he had the great and singular felicity not to owe a shilling in the world.

These advantages however could avail but little in procuring for Ned any reputable employment ; and neither his spirit nor his education could brook a situation, however profitable, that should throw him out of the rank in which he had always lived. He had now just completed his nineteenth year, and under the tuition of his father, who was an excellent scholar, had attained as great a stock both of classical and scientific knowledge as any young man of his years could do in any situation whatsoever.

soever. It was the design of Mr. Evans to send him to the university if possible, and to educate him for his own profession—but the narrowness of his circumstances would not allow it. And why he should think of the church, in which he himself, and even his father before him, had such ill success, can only be accounted for from the extreme reverence in which he held every thing belonging to religion, and that both his father's experience and his own had convinced him that it is possible to be happy in the humblest situation which the church affords—for old Mr. Evans had lived a contented curate to the eighty-fifth year of his age, and now he himself was approaching the sixtieth of his, without ever being able to get a step higher, though possessed of virtues and abilities to adorn the highest. But here let us not blame too hastily the right reverend prelates, to whom the care of the church is entrusted.

Their lordships consider christianity as a glorious edifice, of which they for a time

K. 4.

have

have the care, and which it is their duty to transmit to posterity in all its strength and beauty. Men therefore of consummate virtue and abilities, they rightly esteem its strongest support, which, like foundation stones, should always be placed in the lowest part of the building, whilst the more shewy qualifications of courtly manners, splendid names, fine fortunes, great connections, &c. &c. resemble the cornices and corinthian capitals, which though entirely useless in themselves, and unnecessary, yet always occupy the highest stations, being well calculated to surprise the vulgar and make the people stare.

As the church is now settled in its glory (from which may it never fall !), its learned and most reverend bishops, who boast themselves to be the successors of the apostles, have no manner of resemblance to the ignorant and barefooted fishermen who went by that name in primitive times ; their lordships therefore cannot be too much praised for putting into conspicuous stations, those
 whose

whose qualifications resemble their own, because this prevents schism, and because it was truly the apostolic method ; whilst those who in their morals and conduct imitate the manners of the first apostles, should, like them, be exposed to hunger and thirst, to cold and nakedness, to fastings and weariness, to journeyings often, and perils from their own countrymen.

This to be sure is the reason why we see so many wise and virtuous characters among the lowest order of inferior clergy, who, like the dogs in the parable, are fed with the crumbs that fall from their master's table ; and who may think themselves very well off that they are not, like other dogs, kicked out of the room.

These anxieties and contemplations kept our venerable curate from closing his eyes this night. In the morning he met Ned, who, refreshed with sleep, to which he had been so long a stranger, and disencumbered of a great part of the load which hung upon his spirits, had recovered a good deal

of his usual looks, and seemed quite a different man from what he had been for some time past. Mr. Evans led him into the garden, and, seating themselves on that bank which the charming Cecilia had so often pressed, he began seriously to unfold to Ned the probable consequences of his passion if indulged, the absolute necessity he was under of subduing it, and to consult his inclinations on what mode of life he would pursue, that was compatible with their circumstances and situation. I will not tire my readers with a repetition of the arguments and eloquence which he made use of, because I hope that very few of them, if any at all, may be in a similar situation to our unhappy Edward; but I will beg of them to imagine every thing that wisdom, prudence, generosity, friendship, tenderness, and parental affection could suggest, and then perhaps they may form some faint resemblance of Evans's oratory on this occasion, which was not spoken to a dull or unlistening ear, but which sunk deep
into

into the mind, and into the heart of his son. Ned saw the precipice on which he stood, as clearly as his father could shew it to him ; but he stood in need of his supporting hand to save him from growing giddy, and tumbling headlong down. The arguments therefore of his father had with him the weight of commands, and he declared himself ready instantly to adopt any occupation which he should recommend.

The next point to be considered was what occupation—and here indeed lay the difficulty. The church was out of the question ; for, even had it been agreeable to Ned, he was not yet of age to enter into it, and his disorder required an immediate remedy. The army was his passion—and indeed this would have been most eligible, —but, alas ! where were the means ? The curate had no interest—and, what was worse, no money. This profession therefore was obliged to be relinquished with a sigh. They next turned their thoughts to Doctor Jones. Medicine was honourable, even in

its inferior departments ; and if it is true that apothecaries gain elevenpence half-penny in every shilling's worth they sell, the profession must be allowed to be lucrative. But Jones had two apprentices already ; and Ned confessed that though the business was lucrative, yet it did not charm him much ; as it subjected the practitioner always to distressing, and often to disgusting scenes ; and that for his part he thought a fiddler's life much happier, at least much merrier, than a physician's ; and Ned was fond of mirth.—This profession was also laid aside. At length Mr. Evans recollected an old acquaintance of his, who had owed his education to his father, and who, it was said, had made a large fortune by his practice as an attorney. Now, if those who win may laugh, as the proverb says, here was a profession in which Ned might be as merry as he pleased ; and Mr. Evans did not make the least doubt but his old friend and play-fellow, Mr. Muckworm, would repay the obligations which he owed to the family, by
taking

taking Ned as his apprentice without a fee, and by giving him his diet and lodging for the use his pen could be of to him. As Ned made no objection to this scheme, Mr. Evans declared he would set about it that very day, and go and visit his old friend, whom he had not seen for forty years.—He anticipated the joy with which he should renew his acquaintance with the companion of his childhood—the pleasure with which they should talk over their boyish days—and the supreme delight which it must give to Muckworm thus to repay the great obligations which he owed to the family of Evans.

C H A P. XV.

MR. Josiah Muckworm, the gentleman to whose house Mr. Evans was now going, was the son of Mr. Jeremiah Muckworm, who for forty years had served the office of parish clerk, in the church where Mr. Evans's father was curate. His salary as clerk was about five pounds a year, which never could have maintained his family if he had not also kept a little day school, where children were taught their catechism, and to read and write, for half-a-crown a quarter, which brought him in as much more, kept body and soul together, and put a decent suit of clothes on his back on Sunday ; on which day he always got his dinner at old Mr. Evans's after he and his wife had done, and little Josiah used to come often to get a piece of pudding, and play with our worthy curate, who was then a boy much about his own age. As Josiah was

was a shrewd-looking boy, and behaved with great decency and humility, old Mr. Evans was well pleased to have him for a companion for his son; and when the latter was old enough to begin Latin, he thought it would be a good action to give the other some education, of which he seemed extremely susceptible; and that it might be of advantage to his son to have him for a competitor, from that time he took him home to his own house, and treated him in every respect like his own son. The two boys ate together, read together, and slept together, and neither Mr. nor Mrs. Evans made any difference between them; or, if they did, it seemed in favour of Muckworm, who was of a puny and timid disposition, but extremely shrewd and cunning, and so humble and submissive that he would clean any body's shoes for a halfpenny—whilst, on the contrary, young Evans was a sturdy boy, full of life and spirit, and would have knocked any person down, or at least attempted it, who should propose

such an office to him. He was also full of generosity and good nature; a remarkable instance of which he gave even at those tender years.

There was a little garden at the back of his father's house, and in that garden a standard apple tree of an excellent kind, and a very great bearer. There happened to be a great scarcity of fruit one year, and apples were very dear; but on this tree there was a tolerable crop, and old Evans intended to sell the fruit of it, which in that year would have been worth something, and to have laid out the produce in a new gown for his wife, and a new suit of clothes for little Evans—but, alas! just as they were ripening, they were all carried off in one night, and sold nobody knows where. Mr. and Mrs. Evans were very much mortified at it, and the old gentleman was determined to find out the thief. He was indeed nearer home than he expected; for it was no other than little Muckworm himself, who could not resist the temptation of the price

price they would fetch, and who, in conjunction with another imp in the parish, who had the charge of selling them in a neighbouring town, stripped them all off one night after the family was gone to bed, and whilst little Evan, his bedfellow, was fast asleep. As Mr. Evans, however, continued his search, Muckworm began to be terribly frightened, and, relying on the goodness and the love which he knew little Evan had for him, he confessed it all to him, and said he would run away, for he was sure his father would whip him to death when it was found out. Poor little Evan, who could not bear to part with his playfellow, whom he loved much better than he deserved, bade him stay and not be afraid, and that he would take the blame on himself.

The next day, finding his father still busy in his enquiries, and determined to sift the matter, he went to his mother, and, falling on his knees, told her that he had stolen the apples himself with an intent to sell them,

them, and had hid them for that purpose, but that somebody else had smelled them where they lay together, and that he had lost them all except a few that he had eaten. Mrs. Evans was very much surprised at this confession, and gave him a long lecture upon honesty; and his father was so inconsiderate as to give him a good whipping, which he received, however, without flinching, horsed upon the back of Muckworm, who laughed in himself at the success of his cunning, and had afterwards the meanness to boast of it.

The two lads lived on together till old Mr. Evans died, when a distant relation had the goodness to finish young Evans's education at the college, and Muckworm got to be clerk to an attorney of eminence, under whom he profited so much as to succeed him in his business; by an indefatigable attention to which, joined to a great appearance of sanctity, and a most rigid œconomy, he in a short time amassed a considerable sum. He then turned methodist, a religion which

which he found extremely well suited to his disposition, as it considers all good works to be like filthy rags, and the purest virtue to be nothing but splendid sin, unpleasing to God, by whom faith only is accepted. As he now became rich, and held all good works in abhorrence, he became a saint with that party, which recommended him to a vast increase of business, and to several executorships, by which his coffers soon became full. He was now the universal banker of the county, and, by timely loans, on good security, with a small premium, &c. &c. he was at this time one of the richest men in it. As it was a matter of twenty miles from his house to that of Mr. Evans, and their line of life was so different, they had never seen one another from their first separation; Mr. Evans not having any estate to give a mortgage on, and Mr. Muckworm being so immersed in business that he had not a single moment to bestow on any other consideration.

As he approached the house he was
struck

struck with the loneliness of the situation, and a want of neatness in the fences, gates, and offices, which gave it a look of poverty and ruin, rather than the dwelling of a man of opulence. Being arrived at the outer gate, a huge and hungry mastiff attacked the horse, who would certainly have thrown Mr. Evans, if a country fellow who was in the yard had not come to his assistance, and driven the dog away. He then asked if Mr. Muckworm was at home? and the man said he would go and see.

Evans waited near a quarter of an hour with his horse in his hand before the man came back, when telling him he was, he took the horse, and led him away to the stable. A boy with a ragged livery conducted Mr. Evans to his master's room. The room was of a moderate size, but so crowded with book-cases, desks, and a large writing-table, that there was but little room to stir in it. The dust lay so thick on the books as made it evident it was never swept; and the windows being secured both
within

within and without with iron bars, gave it more the air of a prison than a parlour. Muckworm was sitting in an arm chair, dressed in an old brown damask night-gown, much the worse for the wear, and which seemed to be of the same piece with the covering of the elbow chair; he had a night-cap of the same on his head, with a linen one under it; while his wig, with long grey curls, was suspended on a fire-screen in the corner. He had his spectacles on, and a pen in his mouth; in one hand was a pair of money scales, and on the table was a large green velvet bag, which seemed almost full of guineas, several piles of which, that he had been weighing, were standing round it. When Mr. Evans entered the room, Muckworm made a slight inclination of his head; and the good curate going to shake hands with him, Muckworm begged him to sit down, for he was in the midst of an important calculation, which when he had finished he would hear his business.

Evans was a little disappointed at this reception;

reception ; but concluding, as was indeed true, that Muckworm did not know him, he was not much disconcerted. The other continued counting and weighing and piling up light guineas, which he separated from those that were weight, for near a quarter of an hour without speaking a word, or even once raising his eyes, while Evans surveyed him with a mixture of pity, astonishment, and contempt. He saw with pity the alteration which time had made on that countenance, which in their boyish days he had so often beheld with transport. He saw with astonishment how much deeper the furrows of care were impressed upon his features, than those of time ; and he could not behold without contempt, a wretch wasted by avarice to a shadow, and grasping in his feeble hands that gold which he never had spirit to enjoy, and which his wan and meagre aspect seemed to threaten that he soon must leave. At length Muckworm pulled off his spectacles ; and wiping his pen, which he carefully laid by, he asked
 Mr.

Mr. Evans what were his commands with him? "Is it possible, Mr. Muckworm," said Mr. Evans, "that you should forget your old friend?"—"I protest, Sir," said Muckworm, "you have the advantage of me, and I do not recollect ever seeing you before." "Did you ever know any one of the name of Evans?" said the curate. "Evans!" replied Muckworm, "I know Sir Hugh Evans of Montgomeryshire, and Captain Evans of the navy, his nephew." "I thought in the earlier part of your life," said the parson, "there were some others of the name to whom you owed some obligation." "Obligation!" said Muckworm, "what obligation? I remember indeed one Evans, an old man, who was curate of the parish where I was born: I believe he might have christened me, if that is an obligation; but he died before I was of age to enter into any legal obligation."—"Alas! Mr. Muckworm," said Evans, "I find I have mistaken you. I have seen the days when you thought otherwise of my father,
and

and when you considered me as the dearest friend you had.”—“Why, Sir—is your name Evans?” rejoined Muckworm. “Yes, Sir,” said the other; “my name is Evan Evans, whom in the days of innocence and childhood you well knew; though now you seem to have forgotten me.” “Really, Mr. Evans,” replied Muckworm, “it is so long since I have seen you, I think near forty years, that it is no wonder that I had forgotten you—But how has the world gone with you, Mr. Evans? Have the bishops been as mindful of you as of your father?” “I have no reason to complain of the world,” said Mr. Evans, “and I hope it has none to complain of me. I enjoy what is to me a competence, with health and a quiet conscience, without obligations to bishops, or indeed to any except him that made me.” “I am glad to hear you are so independent,” replied Muckworm; “I suppose then, by this unexpected visit, you have a purchase to make, or some money to lend on a good mortgage—is it so?”

so?" I am neither a money-lender nor a money-borrower," replied Evans. "You are then a most extraordinary character," said Muckworm; "for I have hardly seen a face these twenty years at my house that did not come to borrow—Why now I am just making up a sum of 5000*l.* to lend to Sir Thomas Spendall my neighbour here; who with an estate of 10,000*l.* a year is always in want of cash: this is the fourth sum to the same amount I have lent him within these six months." "Bless me!" said Evans, "20,000*l.* in six months! And have you such prodigious sums by you as that, Mr. Muckworm?" "Why yes, Mr. Evans, I thank God, Heaven has prospered my industry. Whoever comes after me will find I did not hide my talent in a napkin." "No, I dare say," replied Evans; I fancy you have made good interest on it." "Pretty well, pretty well; the Lord has been favourable to me—he entrusted me with a little, and I have doubled it a hundred fold. Between you

and me, if I live a few years longer, I shall have all Sir Thomas's estate: he has not been five years in possession of it, and he has spent above 100,000*l*. Oh! if his father saw how his savings melted away, it would make him fester in his shrowd."

"Pray," said Mr. Evans, "how does Sir Thomas spend these monstrous sums? I have not the pleasure to know him, but I have always heard he had a most excellent character, and his tenants say he is the best landlord in the world." "Ay, they say—because they eat his beef, and guzzle his ale; but I say he is the worst of landlords, for he does nothing but encourage idleness and profligacy. His house is a palace where the great are entertained like princes, and his servants' hall a rendezvous where all the beggars in the country, and their brats, may fill their bellies every day; and he is such a fool, that if they tell him of their wants and their distresses, he will give them his money into the bargain; nay, he will part with the clothes off his back.

Why,

Why, there was one of his tenants died last year above 300l. in his debt. He was in possession of a good farm, that was worth a great deal more than he gave for it; and I myself offered fifty pounds a year advance, in order to let it to another for double that sum; when (would you think it?) Sir Thomas would not hear of it, because forsooth the man's widow had been his nurse's daughter, and she had five children to provide for; and so the fool not only continued her in the farm, but also forgave her the debt. Such a man, Mr. Evans, will always be in want of money." "God forbid!" said Evans; "'tis a great pity he should want it."—"I'll tell you another exploit of his," said Muckworm. "You must know, he has lately erected a temple to the devil."—"God bless us!" interrupted Evans, "a temple to the devil! I never heard of such a thing in a christian country." "Hav'n't you?" said Muckworm: "There is not a town in England scarce but has one." "What do you mean?"

said Evans: " I never heard the like before." " Why I mean a play-house," said Muckworm; " a private theatre, in imitation of those vile temples of Covent-Garden and Drury-Lane; where he and his company act stage plays, and all manner of wickedness and profaneness; and where he has even music upon the Lord's day. But now for the exploit.—You must know Sir Thomas is a great lover of music; and some time ago he got one of those Italian fellows from London, one Squallini, to come down to live with him, and to sing upon his theatre; and he had given him a deed for an annuity of no less than 500*l.* a year for his life." " A great sum indeed," said Mr. Evans, " for a few songs !" " Nay, but you shall hear," said Muckworm; " he did not get the songs neither. When he came down to the country, Signor Squallini came with him; and a vast deal of company, as usual, came to pay their compliments, and to hear this famous Italian sing. After supper Sir Thomas asked Squallini

to favour the company with a song. Squallini said he was hoarse, and could not sing; but being pressed hard, he said to Sir Thomas—‘What, Sir Thomas, do you think me come here to be de buffoon?—Me sing for you, Sir Thomas, when alone; and me vil sing upon your theatre: but me will not be made de buffoon for any company in Europe.’ In short, nothing could prevail on him to sing. The company, who knew the salary he had, were amazed. Sir Thomas was so chagrined, that in a few days he turned Squallini out of his house; but he could not reverse his deed. The fellow came to me—I gave him 1000*l.* for it; and Sir Thomas must pay me 500*l.* a year as long as Squallini lives.” “And can you think it honourable,” said Evans, “to be concerned in such an affair?” “Why not?” replied Muckworm: “I look upon every thing to be honourable that is lawful.” “All things that are lawful, however,” said Evans, “are not expedient; and I should have thought it more honour-

able, if the Italian would sell his annuity, to have let the poor gentleman who gave it to him have had the advantage of it." "You think very differently from me," replied Muckworm; "and since you have quoted the great apostle, I must also tell you that he says, 'He who doth not provide for his own is worse than an infidel;' in which great truth I fully agree with him. And now, Mr. Evans, give me leave to ask if you have any particular business with me?"

Evans, who was long ere this completely disgusted and disappointed, replied, "Not very particular. I thought indeed it might have been agreeable to you to meet an old friend whom you had not seen for forty years; and if it had been so, I purposed consulting you about putting my son to your business, who is an exceeding good young man, and has now just completed his nineteenth year." "That's rather too old, rather too old," said Muckworm: "pray what education has your son got, Mr. Evans?" "He has got the best

best that I could give him," replied our curate. "He is well grounded in Greek and Latin, an excellent English scholar; can read Homer and Virgil ad unguem, and is well versed in history both antient and modern." "A fig for Homer and Virgil," said Muckworm, "and all such heathenish nonsense; they fill a man's head with romantic notions about virtue, and honour, and heroism, and stuff which serves no purpose but to mar his fortune." "What!" said Mr. Evans, "are virtue and honour only names, and is there any thing on earth of equal value?" "I tell you," said Muckworm, "I would not give my old shoe for all the virtue and honour upon earth. These are inventions of the devil to disparage the only virtue, which is faith. All human actions are sinful, and whoever relies on good works relies upon rubbish. Your poets, therefore, and your historians, your orators and your philosophers, are all agents of the devil, and enemies to Christ. For my part, I would burn all their books

together, with those that wrote them, and suffer no books to remain but law books and the gospel. If I had had the training of your boy myself," said Muckworm, "perhaps I might have made something of him; but as it is, I can be of no sort of service to you." "God be praised you had not," said Evans; and so rising up to go away, Mr. Muckworm pulled the bell, and the ragged livery boy, whom we mentioned before, appearing, he desired him to get Mr. Evans's horse. The honest curate hastily mounted him, and turned his back for ever on Muckworm and his inhospitable doors.

C H A P. XVI.

IT was near two o'clock in the afternoon, in the middle of December, when Mr. Evans left Mr. Muckworm's. He had rode thither twenty miles from his own house that morning, and the hospitality of Muckworm had not, as we have seen, offered him the refreshment even of a glass of wine. And poor Blackbird had fared no better; for though he was admitted into what they called the stable, yet for any good he got there he might as well have been in a pound. He had not carried his master above five miles in his way home, when the night began to approach, and, what was worse, it brought with it a violent tempest of wind and fleet. Poor Evans, who had not tasted a morsel since he left home, began to droop under the uneasy sensations both of cold and

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hunger. He was a stranger in that part of the country, and long looked out for some friendly roof, that might at least afford him shelter; but nothing appeared before him but a waste and dreary common. At length, as it was growing almost quite dark, he espied a light which seemed to glimmer through the window of some little cottage; and honest Blackbird making an effort to go down the lane which led to it, the worthy curate took his advice, and in a few minutes arrived at a human dwelling.— Though it was but a cottage, and that too of the meanest kind, yet the finding it was now a comfort; and Evans gently tapping at the door, it was opened by an old woman seemingly about sixty years of age. “Honest woman,” said Evans, “can you give shelter to a poor benighted old man, who will heartily thank you for the liberty of your roof and fire?” “Yes, name of God, can I,” said the old woman, “and a thousand welcomes; and to your horse too.— Johnny, come here, boy, and take the gentleman’s

tleman's horse, and put him up beside the cow, and give him a lock of hay." "God bless you, my good woman!" said Evans, "and you too, my pretty boy!" said he to the child, who was about ten years old. "I do not know what I should have done if I had not met with you." "The night is parlous cold," said the dame; "but walk in, sir, and warm yourself at the fire: the cottage is small, but it is clean, and you are kindly welcome to all it can afford."—Evans gladly accepted this friendly invitation, and, walking in, found a clear fire on a clean hearth; and sitting down in a straw chair which was at hand, he felt himself a thousand times more comfortable than he could have been in the best room in Muckworm's house. The good woman, who now saw by his dress that he was a clergyman, redoubled her attention; for, notwithstanding the poverty of the Welch clergy, which is known even to a proverb, yet there is no country in which the ministerial character meets more respect. "Lord bless your

reverence," said she, "what brings you out such an evening as this, and where have you dined?"—

"Indeed, my good woman," said Evans, "I have hardly tasted food to-day." "Name of God," said she, not tasted food!—I've warrant you've been at Mr. Muckworm's." "You have just hit it," said Evans, "I have come from there indeed." "Aye, name of God! I thought so: he's a parlous rich man, but he would skin a louse for the hide. Well, God forgive him! but if it had not been for him, I need not have been here to-day." "Why, did he ever injure you?" said Evans. "No, name of God, I must not say that—he fought but his own, to be sure; though it killed my poor husband, and brought me to ruin." "How is that, my poor woman?" said Evans; "how is that?" "I'll tell your reverence all by and by," said the good woman; "but first I will get you something to eat, for I am sure you stand in need of it."

She now spread a clean napkin on a little table,

table, and, putting a saucepan on the fire, boiled half a dozen new-laid eggs. She laid down some butter and cheese of her own make, which with new-churned buttermilk, and some fresh oaten bread, afforded Evans the most delicious repast he had ever made;—not that the materials were better than what he had been accustomed to at home, but her generous hospitality, contrasted with the churlishness of Muckworm, touched his heart, and gave an inconceivable relish to his entertainment. Often did he wish for the power of Elijah, that her measure of corn should not waste, nor her cruise of oil be diminished. When he had finished his comfortable meal, and given thanks first to his Maker, and then to his entertainer, he begged of the good woman to sit down, and gratify the curiosity she had excited.

“Alas, sir!” said she, “my story is very simple, and your reverence will hardly think it worth the hearing; yet for want of better I will tell it you, to amuse you till you go to

to sleep. My maiden name was Jane Williams, and my father was a farmer in Denbighshire; he was well to live, and was said to have plenty of money besides his stock. But it was my misfortune to disoblige him, by marrying without his consent. There was a young man came to live with him whose name was Edward Maurice; as handsome a lad to look to, as you would see in a summer's day—Well, rest his soul!—I trust he is with God.

“ This lad was not long at the house, before he eyed me with particular regard—and to say the truth, I looked on him with equal affection; but as the poor lad had nothing but his labour to depend on, I knew my father and mother would never consent to our being married: we therefore determined not to ask them; but going once together to a fair, we took advantage of that opportunity, and were married for half-a-crown, by a gentleman who was preaching in a field to a great congregation. Well, we kept all secret for some time, till
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at length it became necessary to tell it, or a little one would do it for us; and then my parents were so enraged, that they turned us both out of doors, and gave me nothing but the clothes on my back; nor would they ever afterwards be reconciled. My poor Edward however did not make the worse husband for that, but carried me to another part of the country, to his mother, who received me kindly; and there I lay-in, and lived some years as happy as the day was long. At last the good old woman died; and then my husband, who by his industry had scraped together a little matter of money, resolved to take a farm himself. We rented one of about 20l. a year from the late Lord Squanderfield, and for three and twenty years that we were his lordship's tenants, we did very well, and always paid our rent. I had several children in that time; but none of them grew to be men, except my oldest son—and alas! he too is now gone.” “When did he die?” said Mr. Evans. “He was killed fighting for his country,”

country," said the poor woman. "Alas! the pity," said Evans, and wiped a tear from his eyes. "Come hither, Johnny," said she; "go shew yourself to that gentleman. This, sir, is my grandson, my son's son—the only comfort I have left." "He is a fine boy," said Evans, clapping him on the head; "God bless him, and make him a comfort to you!" "I thank your reverence," said she, "and say amen to that sweet prayer."

"Well, sir, as I was telling you, we did very well all the time my late lord lived; but when my young lord came, the times were altered.—He has a great estate in England, and never comes down to this country as his father did; so that we never saw him: and his agent is always pressing for money, and distraining the moment it is due; for he says it is my lord's order, and he will not suffer any of his tenants to be a farthing in arrear. The lands too are greatly advanced since the young lord's time; and so it happened some years ago,
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after two very bad harvests, that my poor husband was not able to pay at the time appointed; and the agent threatening immediately to distrain, he had recourse to Mr. Muckworm, who, after he signed some papers, advanced him twenty guineas, with which he paid his rent. Well, sir, this did for that time:—but the next year he was again deficient; and Mr. Muckworm came upon him too for his debt, which by some means or other he contrived to make thirty pounds; and when my poor husband could not pay it, he arrested him and sent him to goal. Meantime the agent ejected us for my lord, and seized on all our things, which were sold to pay his rent, and did not fetch more than would do it, though they cost four times as much. My poor son, who with his wife lived with us, when he saw his father in gaol, and the farm gone, determined to go to sea, and try if he could earn any thing to relieve him. He carried his wife and child home to her father and mother, and entered on board a king's ship, where

where he had not been three months till he was killed in an engagement with the French. His poor wife, who was with child when he left her, took his death so much to heart that it hastened her labour, and she and her infant expired together.

“ My poor husband lay two years in Denbigh gaol: at last some kind-hearted person told Sir Thomas Spendall of our distresses, and that generous and charitable gentleman sent for me; and when he heard the whole account, and enquired into its truth, he not only released my husband out of prison, but promised to set him up in a little farm under himself; and had God spared my poor Edward, he certainly would have done so, for he never breaks his word. But it did not please the Almighty that I should be so happy; for the cold and damps of the prison had so broke my poor husband's health, that he died of the rheumatism in less than half a year.

“ However, Sir Thomas did not leave me in my distress; he gave me this little cottage,

tage, with a garden, and grafs plat for my cow, rent free ;—and, God blefs him ! he gave me ten guineas to buy myfelf neceffaries, and faid I never fhould want that fum every year ; and indeed he is as good as his word, and better too.”

“ Where is Sir Thomas now ?” faid Mr. Evans. “ Indeed I don’t know, fir,” faid the poor woman, “ but I believe he is gone to London ; it is but laft week he went from his houfe in this neighbourhood.” “ I am forry he is gone,” faid Evans : “ I would walk fifty miles to kifs the hand that could do fuch noble things.” “ Oh, fir,” replied fhe, “ he is the beft-natured man in the world. There would not be an aching heart in Wales, if he could help it.”

Evans now thanked the good woman for her ftory, which he faid was extremely affecting ; but he hoped to live to fee the day when her little grandfon would repay her trouble, and be a new fpring of comfort to her. And now expref-
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sing a desire to sleep, she shewed him into a little inner apartment, where was a bedstead with some fresh straw and clean blankets, and where our worthy curate enjoyed a sweeter and more profound repose than was perhaps experienced on the softest down in any palace in Europe.

C H A P. XVII.

THE morning now glittered through the hedges, on whose naked boughs the night had shed her tears, which the keen air had frozen into gems more pure and transparent than ever adorned the tresses of an Indian queen. Thousands of larks now gathered near the doors, where the sound of the early flail gave them hopes of a breakfast. Now Goody Matrice swept her cleanly cottage, and heaped her hospitable hearth with kindled peats; the smoke of which rose through her humble thatch, till, meeting with the new-risen sun, it ascended in a golden column to the cloudless skies, and, like the pious offering of Abel, seemed to be a sacrifice acceptable to heaven. Now had the sweet-breathed cow yielded her treasure of morning's milk; whilst her new com-

companion Blackbird, by the attention of little Johnny, was regaling on some clover hay, collected for her winter's food. And now had little Johnny himself well greased the parson's boots, who was still snoring in his first nap, and then had gone to wash his face and comb his hair against his reverence arose—which probably would not have been for an hour to come, had not the cock, who had been long in vain soliciting the favour of one of his strutting dames, at length succeeded; when mounting on the thatch, exactly over Evans's head, he clapped his wings and proclaimed his triumph aloud.

This clarion waked him; and, surprised to see the day so far advanced, he hastily arose, convinced, by experience, how refreshing is the bed of straw, and how sweet the slumbers of the labouring man. Well was he pleased, as he walked through the outer room, to see the attention of his kind hostess, who had spread her little table as the night before, and prepared new milk and a
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hot oat-cake for his breakfast. Advancing to the door, he saw a bright and cloudless sky, and, clearing his voice, as was his custom in the morning, he made the woods re-echo with a loud hem. "God bless your reverence!" said Goody Maurice, who now came forward from the cow-house; "I see your reverence has good lungs, and I hope will live this many a year. How did your reverence sleep?" said she; "I fear you found the straw too hard?" "Not at all, dame," said Evans: "I never slept better in my life, nor ever had more thorough satisfaction in my entertainment." "It is your goodness, sir, that says so," replied the old woman, "for I am sure it is what your reverence is not accustomed to; but will your reverence walk in and take some breakfast?" "Yes, my good woman, and thank you heartily." And now, little Johnny with clean hands and face attending with his boots, he seemed greatly pleased with his neatness and the innocence of his looks. During breakfast he asked him many questions

tions in his catechism, and about other such matters as he might be supposed to know ; to all which he answered to his satisfaction, which greatly delighted Evans, and did not fail to draw from him much commendation.

And now having finished his meal, and Blackbird being ready, he went to mount ; but first he took out half-a-crown to reward the trouble of his kind landlady : but great was his astonishment when she peremptorily refused to take a farthing.—She said the bounty of Sir Thomas had given her plenty, and God forbid she should make a traffic of it, or take such a sum for the pitiful morsel that his reverence had been so good as to accept ! “ Good woman,” said Evans, “ I know not which to admire most, your virtue or your good manners : but I know they are both such as may often put the highest stations to the blush.”—Then calling little Johnny, he forced the half-crown into his hand ; and telling them both who he was, and where he lived, he
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gave them an invitation to his house, and rode away.

All the way as he went he amused himself with contrasting his reception at Muckworm's and the poor widow's. This led him into many refined speculations on the nature of the human heart; its natural tendency to virtue, and the power of gold to corrupt it: though in the instance of Sir Thomas he had the most satisfactory proof that there were some hearts so pure that riches could not corrupt them. With this pleasing contemplation did he solace himself till he beheld at a distance the delightful prospect of the evening sun glistening on his own windows; and honest Blackbird quickening his pace, and setting up a loud whinny, he soon saw Ned (who had been long expecting him) running to meet him, and with his usual cheerful and rosy countenance welcome him home; where he found a blazing fire, a comfortable meal, and a good-humoured wife ready to receive him.

To those who live in splendid palaces,

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and are occupied in the business of the great world, the soothing transports of domestic happiness are seldom known. Their vitiated appetites, sated by perpetual indulgence, can taste no pleasures but what intoxicate, and therefore cannot relish the simple draught drawn from the pure fountain of connubial bliss, whose un sullied spring flows with ever new delight for those who can enjoy it.—Such therefore cannot conceive the satisfaction which now glowed in the countenances of this happy and united little family on its head's return, nor what an addition of relish the absence even of one day gives to such a meeting. To have viewed the placid face of Evans as he ate his mutton, and the lively eye with which he beheld his amber ale sparkling in the glass, one would have imagined he had returned to his little family full freighted with some news of their advancement, some important success that was to establish them in future beyond the reach of fortune. Nor, when he told them his reception with

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Muckworm, did it in the least abate their enjoyment, but rather added to it : for they made it a subject of much laughter all the evening, and drew from it besides this comfortable conclusion, that happiness did not lie in wealth ; and that their own situation, humble as it was, was beyond all comparison more eligible than his. They did not withhold due praise from the behaviour of the poor widow, to whom Mrs. Evans declared herself infinitely obliged, and that she would never be at rest till she found out some way of repaying her kindness.

Ned urged his father to take home the little boy, and teach him to read and write, in doing which he promised to assist him ; and that he might be put to do such work in the garden as was suited to his strength and years, where also he might learn the whole art of common gardening, which would be a help to them, and might turn out of the greatest advantage to the boy. Mrs. Evans did not at all object to this little addition to their household, but seemed

extremely desirous to do whatever lay in her power both for the child and the old woman : and the good curate said he would think of it ; but for the present there was no hurry, as the boy was very young ; and besides, he thought it improper to do any thing without first asking permission of Sir Thomas, who had been extremely generous to them, and might consider it impertinent in him to interfere with any body whom he had taken under his protection :—but he declared his resolution to wait upon Sir Thomas as soon as he returned to the country, for he longed to be acquainted with a gentleman of whose heart and whose humanity he had conceived the highest opinion. Mrs. Evans and Ned acquiesced in this determination, the propriety of which struck them now, though in the warmth of their gratitude they had overlooked it before.

Thus did our good curate conclude his fruitless embassy to Mr. Muckworm. Perhaps it may be thought an argument of his
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simplicity ever to have undertaken it, and I will not deny but it does look as if he was not thoroughly acquainted with the manners of the modern world: but that worthy man judged of other men's hearts by his own; and feeling in himself how infinitely it would have rejoiced him to have such an opportunity of obliging an old friend, we may excuse his error in supposing it would be equally agreeable to Mr. Muckworm. As it was, though greatly disappointed, yet he was not dejected, but resolved to trust to Providence and time for some fortunate event in Ned's favour, and in the meanwhile to divert him at home as much as possible, by engaging him in some employment that might at once afford amusement to the mind and exercise to the body.

An accident happened about this time which greatly forwarded this plan. Mr. Watkin had gone one morning to a fair, nine or ten miles from his own house. It has been before observed, that he was of a

morose disposition, and though in very affluent circumstances, yet so extremely narrow as to allow himself little more than the bare necessities of life: he was besides excessively proud, and too apt to assume a superiority over his neighbours, who, excepting the article of cash, were in every other respect his equals. This conduct created him many enemies, and prevented his having any friends: and accordingly at this fair he got into a dispute with a young fellow about buying some cattle, in which he gave the young man some harsh language, which provoked him to retaliate:—from words it came to blows; and as he had no body to espouse his cause, or rescue him from his antagonist, he got a most severe beating, without being either pitied or relieved. At last the young fellow quitted him, moved either by returning pity, or fearing he had given a blow too much, for the last stroke had laid him senseless on the ground; and some people more humane than the rest, coming by at that time, laid him in a cart,

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and carried him home to his own house, in a very doubtful situation as to life. His poor wife and daughter, who wanted neither duty nor affection, forgot all that was disagreeable in his manners when they saw him in distress, and, fancying him already dead, vented their sorrow in shrieks and tears. Having washed away the blood and dirt with which his face was clotted, they put him into bed, unable to speak, and seemingly almost senseless;—his eyes were so swelled and black, that they could not tell whether he would ever see again or not; and the only signs of life he gave were, that he still breathed, and now and then drank a little water which they put to his lips. In this distressing situation, they sent for Mr. Evans, who was the usual refuge of all his parishioners when any calamity befel them; and that good man, attended by Ned, went immediately to the house, to give them what comfort and what assistance he could. By his advice they dispatched a messenger for Doctor Jones; and having sat a while with

Mrs. Watkin, he returned home, leaving Ned to take care of the women, and to be otherwise assisting as far as was in his power.

This amiable young man never was so happy as when employed in any work of kindness or good nature ; he soothed the terrors of Mrs. Watkin, by assuring her that her husband had received no material injury, and that his apparent insensibility probably arose from fatigue, after an unusual exertion of passion, added to his bruises, and perhaps to his having taken a cup of ale too much ; for his usual abstinence was so great, that a very small quantity of liquor might affect him. He summoned all his cheerfulness (of which indeed till lately he had a very large stock) to entertain them ; and in this he succeeded so well, that Miss Watkin at least thought it one of the pleasantest evenings she had passed for a great while ; and indeed an indifferent spectator might have discovered that that poor girl was all the while drinking deli-

delicious poison from the eyes of Ned, which were intending to beam nothing but good nature, and which were wholly unconscious of the mischief they were doing; for poor Ned's heart was already struck by the divine Cecilia, and was so saturated with love that it was incapable of imbibing more from any object whatsoever. As vanity too had no share in his composition, the gentle Harriet might long have gazed on him, without awakening a suspicion that she viewed him with any other eyes but those of friendship:—the poor girl did not even know it herself; but while she was doting on his beauty, she fancied she was admiring only his wit, his courage, his virtue, and his good nature. 'Tis thus that Love insinuates himself into the heart—the subtle deceiver assumes some flattering disguise to recommend himself to our notice; we admit him into our bosoms under the name of honour, generosity, friendship, or some other splendid appellation, which soothes our vanity, and reconciles us to our

new guest. But soon do we lament our easy faith—the false intruder sooths no more—he saps our senses, undermines our reason, wrings our heart; he becomes the tyrant, and, alas! too often, the destroyer of our souls. Oh fly then, ye incautious fair! fly, fly whilst yet you may!—listen not to his syren song; shun, shun his first approach,—lest, like the dreadful whirlpool of Mac-
strom, you play round him for a time in circles, till, by insensible though sure degrees, you are drawn into his irresistible vortex, and swallowed up for ever.

It now grew very late, and, neither the Doctor nor the messenger returning, Ned was shewn to his apartment, where we will leave him to his repose, and to those happy dreams which sometimes are indulged to innocent and faithful lovers. Mrs. Watkin sat up with her husband, and the poor Harriet retired to her bed, where she slept but little, and began to feel how dangerous a lodger she had admitted into her breast.

C H A P.

C H A P. XVIII.

DOCTOR Jones made his appearance in the morning, and was immediately conducted to Mr. Watkin's apartment. That poor man had recovered his senses and the use of his tongue, but was so sore from his bruises that he was unable to move without great pain. The doctor examined the wounds and cuts he had received ; but not finding any fracture or external bruise that was alarming, he quieted the fears of the family in that respect. He observed, however, some feverish symptoms in Mr. Watkin ; and in relating the circumstances of what had befallen him, he had been roused anew into so violent a passion that he thought it necessary to warn Mrs. Watkin on that head ; and, as there was reason to apprehend he might have a fever, that he should be kept as composed as possible.

When Mr. Watkin was informed that Ned Evans was in the house, he desired to see him; when, thanking him for the kindness of his visit, he requested that he would stay there for a few days, and superintend the management of his business, which Ned promised to do in the best manner he was able; and thus the tyrant Love was contriving to rivet the chains which he had forged for the heart of poor Harriet. That innocent girl was rejoiced when she heard of the invitation, and thought of nothing but the happiness she should enjoy in seeing the beloved of her soul every hour of the day. Mrs. Watkin too was pleased, for she loved Ned with an unaffected friendship; and though she did not dream of her daughter's attachment, yet it is more than probable that, had she known it, she would not have disapproved of it.

The delighted Harriet sat down to breakfast with unusual vivacity; yet before that meal was over did cruel Love introduce a new fiend, his never-failing companion, into her

her gentle heart. This fiend was jealousy. Who that has ever felt love, is ignorant of this detested name? Doctor Jones seeing Ned at breakfast, very naturally enquired if he had heard from Miss Cecilia? At the name of Cecilia a deep blush suffused the artless youth's cheeks—and, with a sigh that could not be suppressed, he replied, they had received no word as yet. As Eve when she had eaten the forbidden fruit became instantly quick-sighted to discern evil as well as good, so did love open the eyes of the innocent and unsuspecting Harriet, and in one moment discovered to her the fatal truth that Ned's heart was already engaged, and by whom.

The friendship and admiration with which she had so lately and so sincerely beheld the charming Cecilia, were in one moment blasted to the roots; and the baneful passion of envy rising in that bosom which had ever hitherto been serene, resembled those pestilential winds which are said to be formed in the deserts of Arabia, and which,

passing over the cultivated fields, deface in an instant all the beauties of nature. Oh Love ! thou who art called the offspring of heaven—the soother and refiner of the human soul ! surely thou returnedst to thy native skies when thy first possessors lost their innocence ; and he who now usurps thy name is one of those deceitful fiends to whom their fatal transgression first gave admission—else why should you torment ? or why be accompanied with all those pangs and sorrows which flatter first and then destroy ?

The fever which the doctor expected soon made its appearance, and Mr. Watkin was for near three weeks closely confined : at one time indeed there were great apprehensions for his life ; but the strength of his constitution got the better of his disease, and at the end of the time above mentioned he was able to walk about. During all this time Ned staid at his house, and only went home now and then for an hour or so to see his father and mother. Mrs. Watkin had

had been as attentive to him as if he had been the first personage in the county; and it need not be doubted but that Harriet, who loved him with all her soul, would go hand in hand with her mother in shewing him every kindness. And indeed the indefatigable attention that he bestowed on Mr. Watkin's affairs demanded this respect, exclusive of his native amiableness, which won it irresistibly from all hearts. So that we cannot blame Miss Watkin, nor think her the least deficient in delicacy; if hers felt the impression so natural to her sex and years; but rather lament that there should be any impediment likely to prevent her meeting that return which it is but justice to say she every day deserved. The poor girl herself was not insensible of this impediment; yet would she sometimes indulge the hope that the lovely object of his affections was of a rank too high for him to aspire to with any prospect of success—and in this hope she was not deceived;—and then she flattered herself that the
fidelity

fidelity of her own attachment would at last meet its reward, especially as it was more than probable his father and mother would be her friend, since they had always expressed for her the warmest affection, and they well knew how advantageous her alliance would be in point of interest. Indeed, this generous girl valued the prospect of her fortune for nothing so much as the use it might be of to Ned, on whom she would gladly confer the Indies if she had them to bestow. She did not doubt either of getting her own father to desire this union, for he had conceived as warm an affection for Ned as it was possible for him to have for any body besides himself; and he was so well satisfied with his care during his illness, that he declared, if Mr. Evans would take a farm for his son, he would immediately advance him money to stock it, and only require common interest; which was a great deal from one of his disposition, who literally loved money better than he did himself.

All

All these favourable prospects soothed Miss Watkin into some hopes of success, which were the more reasonable, as it was now near six weeks since Lady Cecilia had left Mr. Evans, and in all that time they had not received the least account from her; and indeed the Evanses themselves began to think that, like other great folk, she had forgot her country acquaintance, and that the memory of the Welch cottage was lost in the splendour of her father's palace. But Ned would never give into this suspicion: his terrors were, that she had met with some new disaster, or that she was dead; for he said he would pawn his soul upon it, that she would not live and be well, and neglect them altogether. In this sentiment he was not mistaken; for she was of a mind infinitely too noble to forget her friends because they were her inferiors—of a heart infinitely too just to forget the obligations which she owed to the gallant and the tender Edward. The truth is, that when she arrived in Dublin, she found
her

her father in a situation that absorbed all her attention. It has been before observed; that Lord Ravensdale was in the gout when Lady Cecilia left her aunt, Lady Elizabeth Belmont.

The reader is already acquainted with the unfortunate interruption to her journey; and as Lady Elizabeth had written to her brother by her niece, his lordship had not received that letter, and consequently knew nothing of Lady Cecilia's having quitted London. Her ladyship's severe illness in Wales, occasioned by her terror, and her subsequent desire to be unknown, prevented her from writing, thinking every day to go over herself; but Lady Elizabeth Belmont, wondering at not hearing from Ireland, wrote again to Lord Ravensdale by post, and enclosed a letter in it for Lady Cecilia, which was the first intelligence he had received of her having quitted London; and the agony this threw him into, of not knowing what was become of her, threw the gout into his head, and put his life in
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the most imminent danger. Such was his situation when Lady Cecilia arrived; and as at that time he was not capable of seeing her, or of knowing her if he had seen her, the affliction of Lady Cecilia was inexpressible, aggravated as it must be by the reflection how great a share she herself had in his illness. At last it pleased Heaven to abate his disorder, and the sight of Lady Cecilia herself perfected the cure; for no parent ever loved his children better than Lord Ravensdale, and his lovely daughter was his peculiar care. The joy he felt in folding her again to his bosom dissipated all remains of his complaint, and soothed the sorrow with which he heard of the death of his amiable friend Mrs. Melville; and he expressed the utmost gratitude for the Evanses, particularly for Ned, whose gallantry he was determined to reward.

It was a few days after Ned had returned home to his father's, and that Mr. Watkin was entirely restored to his usual health, that our venerable curate was consulting
with

with his son on the subject of the farm which Watkin had suggested; and the propriety of being obliged to him for the sum necessary to stock it. Ned expressed a horror of beginning the world with a debt, which he said would encumber his spirits, and be a clog on all his operations. And Mr. Evans highly applauded his prudence, and the delicacy of his feeling on that head. "He who runs in debt," said he, "parts with just so much of his liberty and peace of mind as he borrows, and must for ever feel inferior to his creditor till he is paid: whereas he who owes nothing is always independent, and, though ever so poor, must feel and rejoice in the dignity of his situation. Yet, my dear boy," continued he, "there are sometimes occasions upon which a man may contract a debt without any imputation on his prudence, or danger in its consequence; and I think this is one of them: wherefore, if you wish to try your hand in the farming business, you may begin with a small one, which will not require

quire much to set it up, and I shall take care that what you may want from Mr. Watkin shall not much encumber you."

Ned acknowledged with all gratitude the generosity and affection of his father; but absolutely refused his bearing any part of the burthen, or joining in the security. "God knows," said he, "how I might succeed; and if I come to any loss, how much will it be imbittered by involving you!" It is probable indeed, had Ned engaged in farming, and accepted Mr. Watkin's offer, that neither he nor his father would have come to any loss; for his prudence, activity, and skill, were equal to any thing that he should undertake. But fortune had a different scene of life in view for him, which was more adapted to his genius and inclinations; for a day or two after this, as they were sitting at breakfast, Morgan came into the room in a great hurry, and told Mr. Evans that there was a gentleman in a post-chaise at the gate who wanted to speak to him, but that he said he had

had

had no time to alight. When he went out to the chaise, the gentleman asked him if he was acquainted with the Earl of Ravensdale? He assured him he had never heard of that nobleman. "Are you then the reverend Mr. Evans of Llanrhwscoedd?" He answered, that was indeed his designation. "Then, Sir," said the gentleman, "I have orders from his lordship to deliver this packet to you (handing a large bundle out of the chaise), and I suppose the contents will explain themselves." Mr. Evans then pressed the gentleman to alight and take some refreshment; but he said he could not possibly wait, for he must be in London the following day:—so wishing him a good morning he drove off.

Mr. Evans now returned into the house, bearing the bundle in his hand; which when Mrs. Evans saw, "I will lay my mode cloak to a brass pin," said she, "that here is some news from Miss Cecilia." "I assure you," replied her husband, "this packet comes from an Earl; but what the contents

contents are I cannot say." "Open it and see," said she. Ned, who was all breathless expectation, cut the string which tied it, when out came——nothing but another bundle within the former. When this was opened, the first things that presented themselves were three letters; one in a man's hand to Mr. Evans; another in a lady's, directed to him also; and a third in the first hand, larger than the two former, directed to Ned.

The lady's letter was first opened, which contained the following words:

"Dublin, Feb. 8th, 1780.

"MY DEAR AND VALUABLE FRIENDS,

"I fear you will begin to think that your ungrateful Cecilia has been base enough to forget the generous protection and kind hospitality which you afforded her in Wales. Yet can I assure you, that though my heart is not a rock, the impression of your kindness is more durably engraved on it, than it could be on any stone. Inscriptions on
marble

marble are effaced long before the marble itself is consumed, on which they are engraved; but my heart must perish before it can forget the friendship of my kind protectors.

“ When I arrived in Dublin, I found my father in such a situation as called for all my care and absorbed all other attention. For many days did I expect the most afflicting stroke with which Providence could have chastened me; but it has pleased Heaven to avert the blow, and to restore my father to his usual health. He writes himself by this conveyance, to express his gratitude to you both, and to Mr. Edward, for all your kindness to me; and I hope his manner of doing it will be agreeable. You will pardon me, my dear friends, if I concealed from you before, the rank which my father holds in this kingdom. Titles oftener embarrass friendships than promote them; and if hiding my own was a deceit, it was the first and the last that I shall ever practise with you.

I beg

I beg you will give the inclosed, with my best affection, to Miss Watkin. I hope my dear Mrs. Evans will accept of the few things sent herewith as a token of friendship, and that you will both of you continue to think of me and love me.

“ It would be unpardonable in me to conclude this letter, without offering my kindest and most grateful compliments to Mr. Edward, and hoping that we may all live to meet again,

I remain

Your much obliged

And sincerely affectionate

CECILIA RIVERS.”

The Earl's letter to Mr. Evans, which was next opened, was as follows :

“ Merrion Square, Feb. 8th, 1780.

“ REV. SIR,

“ I take the first opportunity in my power, of expressing to you the grateful sense I entertain of your extreme civility

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and attention to my daughter, Lady Cecilia Rivers, during her residence at your house ; and I congratulate you upon having a son, who, by his conduct to her ladyship in the hour of her distress, is an honour not only to you but to his country. I should not have been so long in making this acknowledgment, had I not been confined by a most severe illness, which had well nigh brought me to the grave ; but from which I am now pretty well recovered. The first use I made of my returning health, was to wait upon his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of this kingdom, who has enabled me to present your son with a pair of colours in a regiment now raising here, and in which my second son is to have a company. I write to the young gentleman himself, and send him his commission enclosed, which I hope will be acceptable to you both.

“ I take the liberty of enclosing to you a bank bill for one hundred guineas, which I entreat of you to accept, to reimburse
you

you any extraordinary expence that you must have been at while my daughter was with you ; and I conclude with assuring you that at all times it will give me the highest pleasure if I should be able in any way to promote either your interest or your son's.

“ I remain, Sir,

With great gratitude and respect,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

RAVENSDALE.”

Ned's letter was the next to be opened ; when the first thing that presented itself was his commission, written on parchment, and already signed by his Majesty. Lord Ravensdale's words were as follow :

“ Merrion Square, Feb. 8th, 1780.

“ SIR,

“ Your gallant and generous behaviour on the unhappy occasion which first introduced my daughter, Lady Cecilia Rivers, to your acquaintance, has laid me under so great an obligation, that I really want

words to express my thanks, or the high sense I entertain of your merit. I should have acknowledged this sooner, but for a severe illness from which I have but lately recovered, and that I wished my expressions of gratitude might be accompanied with something more substantial than mere words. I have therefore solicited, and been happy enough to obtain for you, from his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of this kingdom, a commission which has been signed by his Majesty, and which I send you enclosed, whereby you are appointed eldest ensign in a regiment now raising for his service in this kingdom, and in the company of which my son is to be the captain. I should not have taken this step without consulting you, only that the applications were so numerous that there was no time to be lost; and when I considered your spirit and your youth, I could not doubt but you would as gladly exert your courage in defence of your country, as you have already done in that of my daughter.

“ The

“ The regiment is expected to be ordered to America in the summer. It will therefore be advisable for you to come over to this kingdom as soon after the receipt of this as may be convenient to you; and while you stay in it, I shall be most happy if you will consider my house as your home.

“ I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your much obliged and obedient servant,

RAVENSDALE.”

The surprise and transport of joy which now seized on Edward, kept him silent for some time; yet were extremely visible in his whole frame. His cheeks glowed with a deeper crimson, and his eyes sparkled with unusual fire—not unlike those of the generous steed, when he first hears the sound of the trumpet; when with erected ears he foams upon the bit, and, pawing the ground, devours with his eye the space that separates him from the foe. Such were the first looks of the gallant Edward, when he

found himself an officer ; but soon the soft idea of the lovely Cecilia rose in his imagination, when his corresponding features put on equal softness, and the lightning of his eye melted into the sweet radiance of tenderness and love. His father watched the various turns of his countenance ; he saw with pleasure the emotions of his soul ; and, clasping him to his bosom with an embrace inexpressibly affectionate, he wished him joy of his promotion. Mrs. Evans too joined in the congratulation ; yet she could not suppress a rising tear, which insensibly dropped upon her cheek, when she reflected how soon he was to be torn from her, to what dangers he was to be exposed, and how many dreadful chances there were that she should never behold him more.

We may indulge the mother in these tender anxieties, which are natural to her sex, and suitable to her character : but the generous spirit of the curate disdained these apprehensions, and he heartily and sincerely rejoiced in the new prospect that was opened

to

to his son, and in the glory with which his fond imagination already saw him covered. And now their first transports being over, they resumed tranquillity enough to examine the other contents of the bundle:—and these were found to be two pieces of the finest Irish linen; two of damask table-linen: twenty-two yards of a rich and grave-coloured silk for a gown and petticoat, and sixteen yards for a gown of the most beautiful Irish tabbinet. These presents gave great satisfaction to Mrs. Evans, who said, when she had done examining them, that she had always been of opinion, from the first view she had had of her, that Lady Cecilia was a woman of the highest distinction. Mr. Evans joined in the eulogium on her ladyship, and in extolling the magnificent manner in which Lord Ravensdale had rewarded them; and Ned took occasion to remind them, that it had been ever his opinion that Lady Cecilia would not forget them.

And now Morgan was dispatched to ask

Miss Watkin to tea, that she might share in the general joy; and to carry to her the letter which was enclosed for her; and which they afterwards found was a letter of thanks for her attentions from Lady Cecilia, and contained a present of a very rich and valuable diamond pin.

C H A P. XIX.

THE Evanses had hardly done dinner when Miss Watkin made her appearance, so impatient was she to know the particulars of their news from Lady Cecilia. She brought her diamond pin with her, which was extremely rich and elegant, and which had she received a week before, she would have valued ten times more for the sake of the bestower, than for the intrinsic worth of the jewel. Yet she derived some hope from the elevated rank of the lady, which was now ascertained ; but when she heard of the commission, and the invitation to Lord Ravensdale's, a sudden paleness overspread her countenance ; and if there had not happened to be a glass of water standing on the table, which she drank off, she would probably have fainted. She mustered up resolution enough, however, to wish Ned joy of his commission ; but could not sup-

press her tears when she heard of his being ordered to America, and that he intended to go to Ireland in a week or ten days. What passed in her heart it is not easy to describe, nor can be conceived by any but those who have tenderly loved; it may be compared to the sensation of ice freezing all the powers of the soul, whilst hope, which had been lately planted there, died away to the roots, and all its sweet blossoms withered away for ever.

Evans and Ned imputed her agitation to the terrors of friendship for the dangers he was to undergo; but Mrs. Evans was not so deceived—she clearly saw the real cause; she saw and pitied—for nothing could have been more agreeable to her than that alliance, which would not only have been an ample provision for Ned, but would have kept him at home and in safety. And indeed if her wishes were to determine, she would gladly have returned the commission, and kept her son. But this she knew to be impossible—she knew full well the state of
Ned's

Ned's heart, which this commission flattered ; and were his love out of the question, she knew his passion for glory would never suffer him to forego a profession which it had been the height of his ambition to aspire to ; and she knew also that her husband would be of the same sentiments. So that pity was all the consolation she could give to poor Harriet, and this she did give her from the bottom of her soul. Indeed she soon afterwards took her up to her own bed-chamber under some pretence, where she gave her an opportunity to unbosom herself, and where that poor girl had the consolation to find in her all the tenderness of a mother, and all the fidelity of a friend. This soothed her so much as to enable her to return to the parlour, and to pass the evening without in the least awakening the suspicion either of Mr. Evans or his son. And indeed from this evening Mrs. Evans did really look upon her with the affection of a mother, not thinking it at all improbable but that, if Edward lived, she might

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one day become so ; for she considered his passion for Lady Cecilia as quite romantic, and that there was not the smallest probability of ever being successful : and Mr. Evans himself coincided with her in this opinion ; as he did also in his good wishes for Miss Watkin, when his wife afterwards apprised him of the truth : so that this poor girl found friends and advocates where she most desired them ; and was restored, if not to the sweetness of hope, at least to some degree of complacency and tranquillity of mind. Her regret indeed for his absence, and her terrors for the dangers to which he must be exposed, could not be alleviated except by the consciousness how many partners she had in these anxieties ; for there was not one of Ned's acquaintance who was not solicitous for his welfare.

And now as the time approached when Ned was to go, Mrs. Evans was hurried in preparing for his departure. The two pieces of Irish linen which Lady Cecilia sent her, she cut up into shirts for him,
and

and poor Miss Watkin assisted in the making them : this was a pleasant office to her, and would have recommended them perhaps to Ned, if the consideration of their being Lady Cecilia's present had not already stamped a value on them that could receive no addition. All his friends in the neighbourhood came to congratulate him on his advancement, and to take their leave ; and he spent several days in returning these affectionate visits, and in giving and receiving assurances of unalterable friendship.

On the evening before his departure, Mr. Evans had invited a few friends, and, to make it pass off more easily and agreeably, Price was ordered to attend with his harp. Mr. Watkin, who was now quite recovered, with his wife and Harriet, were of the company. They danced from tea till supper ; and though some hearts among them were certainly heavy, yet it did not seem to affect their heels, which moved nimbly enough the whole evening. After supper, several jovial songs were sung, and, a large
bowl

bowl of the best punch smoking on the table, all melancholy seemed banished. Some of the company knowing the excellence of Ned's finger on the harp, and how charmingly his voice suited with that instrument, requested him to play, and to accompany it. Though he sung in the most masterly manner, yet, contrary to the common custom of all who do, he seldom required a second bidding, but with the utmost readiness obliged the company. He took the harp, and, having put the strings into complete tune, began the sweet Scots air,

Farewell to Lochaber ! and farewell my Jane !

Those who have any taste for music, and who have ever heard this charming air well sung, need not be told how powerful the impression is it leaves upon the heart. When he came to that pathetic close,

May be to return to Lochaber no more !

the

the aptness of the words to his own situation, and the enchanting sweetness of his voice, overpowered poor Harriet, and she burst into tears. His mother, whose passions were also wound up, wanted only this to set her a-flowing also, and she very opportunely kept poor Harriet company. Indeed Ned himself was the only person in the room unaffected, except Mr. Watkin, who, in the midst of the sweetest and most affecting part of the tune, was very calmly lighting his pipe at the candle; and hearing his daughter's voice, he thought she was joining in the song, and cried out, "That's a sweet note, Harriet, do give it us again." This mistake restored the spirits of the company; for Ned, not being able to resist the impulse of laughter, gave way to it, in which he was joined by the whole table except Mr. Watkin, who could not be prevailed on either to laugh or cry.

The remainder of the evening was spent agreeably on all sides till the hour of separation came. Ned led Miss Watkin to
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her horse; when lifting her into her side-saddle he gave her a parting kiss—the tender and unexpected salute thrilled to her finger's ends, which were resting on his neck as he raised her on the horse, and which, by an involuntary compression, now strained him to her bosom; whilst her faltering voice could hardly articulate the words, "Dear Edward, farewell!" The darkness of the night befriended her delicacy, and concealed those tears which now flowed in a torrent from her eyes, and from which they did not cease to flow till sorrow and fatigue at last closed them in sleep.

Ned now went into the stable, to see that the horses were well fed; one of which had been borrowed for him from Mr. Watkin, that Mr. Evans might ride with him to Holyhead. Here he found David Morgan hard at work, preparing all things for the morning's journey. This poor lad, who had a sincere attachment to Ned, had determined in his own mind never to stay behind him after he had once gone away. He had not, however,

however, mentioned this resolution to any body ; but now finding Ned alone, he embraced this opportunity, and, getting between him and the door, begged of him not to go till he had granted him one request. Ned, not expecting any such matter, was surprised what he could desire, and promised, if it was proper for him to do, he would gratify him. He then asked him to take him as his servant. Ned told him he should be very glad to have him, but that he did not think his income would enable him to keep a servant. Honest David replied, that if that was all his objection, he would make that matter easy ; for he would go with him all the world over, and serve him without fee or reward. Ned thanked him for his attachment, but blamed his imprudence ; “ for,” said he, “ it may very possibly happen that it will not be in my power to support you.”—“ Master,” said David, “ leave that to me ; I will not ask any support from you ; I desire only the honour to serve you, and the comfort to be
with

with you; for by ——— (Here he swore an oath which I will not presume to write) I never will stay in this country after you are out of it.”—“Well but,” said Ned, “what will you do?”—“I will enlist,” said David, “in the same regiment with you, and at once serve both you and my king.”—“I applaud your zeal and your friendship,” said Ned; “and if you do, I will promise you all the favour that is in my power to shew you; neither will I accept your services for nothing, but recompense you as it may be in my power.” David’s joy ran over at his eyes; and this point being settled, he went home to his father’s to make known his resolution, and Ned returned into the house.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



